





Due 3/6 mt
pay 2/24

ECCLESIASTICAL BIOGRAPHY

Uniform with this Volume

Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

ESSAYS IN ECCLESIASTICAL BIOGRAPHY

VOL. II

RICHARD BAXTER

THE "EVANGELICAL" SUCCESSION

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE

THE CLAPHAM SECT

THE HISTORIAN OF ENTHUSIASM

THE EPILOGUE

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

ESSAYS
IN
ECCLESIASTICAL BIOGRAPHY

BY
THE RIGHT HON.
SIR JAMES STEPHEN, K.C.B.



VOL. I

NEW IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA

1907

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

- 2 vols. 8vo, *First Printed May 1849 ; Second Edition, October 1850 ; Third Edition, September 1853.*
- 1 vol. 8vo, *July 1860.*
- 1 vol. cr. 8vo, *March 1867 ; Reprinted, October 1867, October 1871, April 1875, July 1883, September 1891.*
- 2 vols. cr. 8vo, *Silver Library Edition, January 1907.*

P R E F A C E


TO

THE "SILVER LIBRARY" EDITION.

ALTHOUGH these Essays were not written with the intention that they should be re-published as a book, the book which they constitute has continued to be sold for nearly sixty years. The Author's grandson believes that its interest may not yet be exhausted ; partly because no one who desires to be versed in the history of human thought can be wholly indifferent to the persons, and groups of persons, discussed ; and partly because the Essays furnish an example of how some of the best English was written in the earlier half of the nineteenth century.

HERBERT STEPHEN.

LONDON, January, 1907.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_KU-670-500

P R E F A C E

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

I HAD destined my contributions to the Edinburgh Review to that early forgetfulness which, with a very few remarkable exceptions, attends and befits the whole mass of the periodical literature of our age. But it has seemed good to certain American booksellers to publish, with my name, repeated editions of a series of those contributions. I am thus an author in my own despite.

In these circumstances I have had to make my choice between publishing an enlarged and corrected edition of those papers, or continuing to appear, to such persons in the United States as are readers of such books, the author of a volume replete with defects and errors. Some of those faults are the result of the mere want of learning and ability to do better; and are therefore incorrigible. But some of them are the result of the haste with which our periodical works are got up by most of the writers of them, and especially by those who, like myself, have been compelled to write in the very scanty leisure of a life of almost ceaseless labour. Such faults are corrigible; and I trust that, in the following volumes, they are corrected. I am thus an author in my own defence.

I prefix these few words to these volumes, not to deprecate criticism, which is always a vain and is not always a sincere attempt, but in order to explain that such censures as may justly be due to what I have written, have not been provoked by any inordinate solicitude of mine to appear before the world in my own person as the writer of a book, nor by any wish to assume to myself the character of a teacher on the sacred topics to which so large a part of this book is devoted.

J. S.

RICHMOND-ON-THAMES,
May, 1849.

P R E F A C E

TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

OF the various criticisms on the original edition of this Book which have reached me, there is one only to which, on republishing it, I think it necessary to refer. This is the commendation which has been bestowed on me of having exhibited extensive research and learning in some of the earlier of these Essays. It is a praise which I am bound and anxious to disclaim. To the utmost of my leisure and opportunities I have, indeed, drawn what I have written from the original authorities. But when leisure and opportunity for the examination of them failed me, I was contented to employ the best secondary sources, collated as carefully as was in my power. For I wrote these papers not as an essayist but as a reviewer, seeking only to meet an ephemeral demand and to gain an ephemeral attention. I have already explained how it happened that this original design gave place to what may appear a more ambitious project. But it is totally foreign to that ambition to win for these volumes any applause to which they are not justly entitled.

J. S.

CAMBRIDGE, Oct., 1850.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE of Sir James Stephen . . . Pp. xi—xvi

I. HILDEBRAND 1—57

Reprinted from an article in the Edinburgh Review, No. 169, on
Gregoire VII., St François d'Assise, St Thomas d'Aquin. Par
E. J. DELÉCLUSE. 2 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1844.

II. SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI 58—99

Reprinted from an article in the Edinburgh Review, No. 173, on
L'Histoire de St François d'Assise (1182—1226). Par EMILE
CHAVIN DE MALAN. Paris, 1845. 2. *St François d'Assise.*
Par E. J. DELÉCLUSE. Paris, 1844.

III. THE FOUNDERS OF JESUITISM 100—188

Reprinted (with large additions) from an article in the Edinburgh
Review, No. 152, on *Exercitia Spiritualia S. P. Ignatii Loyolæ,*
cum Versione literali ex Autographo Hispanico. *Præmittuntur*
R. P. JOANNIS ROTHMEN, *Præpositi Generalis Societatis Jesu,*
Literæ Encycliæ ad Patres et Fratres ejusdem Societatis, de
Spiritualium Exercitiorum. S. P. N. Studio et Usu. Londini,
typis C. Richards, 1837.

IV. MARTIN LUTHER 189—232

Reprinted from an article in the Edinburgh Review, No. 138,
on *The History of the Great Reformation of the Sixteenth Cen-*
tury, in Germany, Switzerland, &c. By J. H. MERLE D'AUBIGNÉ,
President of the Theological School of Geneva. 8vo. Vol. I.
London, 1838.

V. THE FRENCH BENEDICTINES 233—278

Reprinted from an article in the Edinburgh Review, No. 179,
on *Correspondance inédite de Mabillon et de Montfaucon avec*
L'Italie. Par M. VALERY. Paris, 1846.

VI. THE PORT-ROYALISTS 279—336

Reprinted from an article in the Edinburgh Review, No. 148,
on *Reuchlin, Geschichte von Port-Royal. Der Kampf des Re-*
formirten und des Jesuistischen Katholicismus. 1ter Band: Bis
zum Tode Angelica Arnauld. (Reuchlin, History of Port-
Royal. The Struggle of the Reformed and the Jesuitica
Catholicism. 1st vol. : To the death of Angelique Arnauld.)
8vo. Leipsic, 1839.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE

OF

SIR JAMES STEPHEN.

As the connection of the author of these Essays with public affairs though important was not conspicuous, it would be impertinent to assume that any detailed account of him would be interesting to the world at large. This preface has been written solely from an apprehension that in the absence of a very short statement of the principal events of his life, the readers of his works might form a false estimate of them. They cannot be criticised with justice if the circumstances under which they were written are forgotten or unknown.

Sir James Stephen was the third son of the late James Stephen, Esq., well known in the early part of the present century as one of the most prominent opponents of the slave trade and slavery, and one of the most conspicuous members of the well-known society described in the Essay, contained in the present volume, entitled "The Evangelical Succession." He was born at Lambeth, on the 3rd January, 1789, and completed his education at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he took the degree of LL.B., in the year 1812. Having kept his terms at Lincoln's Inn during his residence at Cambridge, he was called to the bar in 1813, and was shortly afterwards appointed by Lord Bathurst to be legal adviser to the Colonial Office. This was the origin of his long connection with the public service.

In the course of the eleven years during which Sir James Stephen pursued his profession, he obtained a considerable share of business at the equity bar, and would probably have risen to high professional distinction if his health and his inclination had been such as to induce him to devote himself exclusively to that object. This, however, was not the case. His taste for his profession was not equal to his success in it, and he was greatly impeded in pursuing it by a very severe illness, and by a weakness of eye-sight, which for many years limited his exer-

tions. For these reasons he retired from the bar in the year 1824, accepting the office of Counsel to the Board of Trade, which he held together with that of legal adviser to the Colonial Office. In 1834 he was appointed Assistant Under-Secretary to the Colonial Office, and in 1836, on the resignation of Mr Hay, he was appointed Under-Secretary of State. He filled this position till the year 1847, when he was forced by illness to resign it. In the summer of 1849 he was appointed Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge, and he held this office till his death, which took place at Coblenz, on the 14th September, 1859. He was also Professor of Modern History and Political Economy at Haileybury from the beginning of 1855 till the college was finally closed at the end of 1857.

The Essays contained in this volume were (with the exception of the concluding one) originally contributed to the *Edinburgh Review*; and all the rest, except the account of the Benedictines, were written whilst their author was Under-Secretary of State. Considerable additions were made to them when they were first published in a collective form in 1849. It would be improper to criticise them here, but it should be remembered by any one who draws inferences from them as to the powers of their author, that their composition was his occasional amusement and relaxation from pursuits of a more engrossing and laborious kind. A few observations on the nature of those pursuits will set this in a clear light.

The position which Sir James Stephen occupied in the Colonial Office was a very singular one. The British colonies are a collection of many separate states, of every degree of importance, from nations like Canada and New South Wales down to the rock of Heligoland, inhabited by a few Germans. The authority of the Crown over these dependencies differs in its origin, its extent, and its limitations. It has to be applied to very different objects, and to populations differing not merely in race, in religion, in law, and in language; but in all the other respects by which the Cingalese, the Caffres, the New Zealanders, and the Hottentots are distinguished from the English settlers of Canada and Australia, the Dutch Boors at the Cape, the French of the Mauritius, and the mongrel populations of Malta, Gibraltar, and the Ionian Islands. In some of these communities the Crown exercises, through the Secretary of State for the Colonies, powers of the most extensive kind; others, as Canada and New South Wales, are independent in all but name; and others are, or during Sir James Stephen's tenure of office were, mere infant settlements, dependent, to a great extent, on the central government for the very simplest elements of civil society. To know exactly what were the powers and what the rights of the English government in respect of each of these communities, to know the history of all the

relations between the United Kingdom and each of its dependencies, and to be able to give an account of the state of parties and local politics in every one of them, was one part of what was required of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. There was hardly any kind of political question upon which he was not bound to be able to advise the parliamentary head of the department when the occasion arose, for the successive Secretaries of State of necessity laboured under a deficiency of special knowledge which it was his duty to be prepared to supply.

It was also his duty to prepare the drafts of almost all the more important despatches, and of the numerous Acts of Parliament which were required by every colony in turn. Upon subjects which were but little understood by the public at large, and which excited but little general interest, this task was often hardly distinguishable from that of government and legislation, and it would perhaps be difficult to mention any man of his generation who could claim the title of a legislator with more justice than Sir James Stephen.

The understanding upon which the permanent offices in the civil service of the Crown are held is, that those who accept them shall give up all claim to personal reputation on the one hand, and shall be shielded from personal responsibility on the other. Though Sir James Stephen was at one time the object of the most bitter personal attacks (often for measures to which he had opposed all the resistance in his power), he never complained of this compact, and his family have no wish to claim for him a reputation which he never had a thought of claiming for himself. It matters little now what share he individually took in the great questions which during his tenure of office arose between the United Kingdom and the colonies. Praise or blame can neither affect him nor change the opinion which those who knew him best entertained of him; but without attempting to lift the veil with which official life must of necessity cover those who enter upon it, it may be said that it fell to his lot to assist in two of the most remarkable transactions even of this century. The first was the abolition of slavery, the second was the establishment of responsible government in Canada. With each of these, and indeed with all other public transactions with which he was concerned, he was connected in the same way. He prepared the measures which others advocated, and furnished many of the arguments and much of the information which they employed. He had, in addition to this, the wearisome and laborious task of superintending the detailed application of the principles which the legislature had established. This was generally a very tedious and most unpleasant process. The controversies which arose with the provincial legislatures of the various West Indian Islands in relation to the arrangements required by the

abolition of slavery were as bitter as they were obscure ; and the relations between this country and Canada were confused and entangled in every possible way by personal and party questions at home, and by the violent dissensions which existed in Canada itself. The difficulty of the transaction of all this business was aggravated by the fact that though great weight was attached to Sir James Stephen's opinion and advice by his official superiors, and though he held strong opinions of his own upon the subjects which came before him, he had no real authority whatever. The principles which he always advocated ultimately obtained complete recognition and success, but he was constantly obliged to take part in measures which he regretted, and of which he disapproved.

It will be readily perceived that such occupations as these involved great labour, great anxiety, and occasionally severe mortification. A single instance of the exertions which he was occasionally called upon to make may be mentioned here. The preparation of the bill for the abolition of slavery had, from various causes, been deferred till the last moment. Sir James Stephen received notice on a Saturday morning to prepare the draft of the bill in time to enable the present Lord Derby to lay it before Parliament early in the following week. He immediately went home, and between Saturday afternoon and the middle of the day on Monday completed the task. The act (3 & 4 Will. IV. c. 73) contains sixty-six sections, fills twenty-six pages in the 8vo edition of the Statute Book, and creates a whole scheme of the most intricate and elaborate kind. This exertion seriously affected his health for many months. It was perhaps the most arduous task of the kind that he ever had to discharge, but it was only one of a series.*

* The author of this sketch, distrusting his own recollection of his father's account of this, and wishing to obtain independent evidence on the subject, applied to his father's valued friend, Mr Halksworth, the present librarian of the Colonial Office, upon the subject, and received from him an answer containing the following passage :—" I am sorry that it is not in my power to afford you any information touching your father's labours in preparing the Slavery Abolition Bill. The late Mr Joseph was his amanuensis at that time, and it was with his pen, not mine, that the draft was written. I have often heard Joseph speak on the matter of the original draft being prepared in the short space of time you mention. He used to tell the story not as an example of your father's mental labours, but of his own physical exertions as his amanuensis.

" In my time it was no unusual thing for your father to dictate before breakfast as much matter as would fill thirty sides of office folio paper, equal to about ten pages of the Edinburgh Review. With a subject that pleased him I don't think he ever knew what it was to feel tired. The words came from his lips in one continuous stream, checked only by the inability of the writer sometimes to keep pace with him. Whatever the subject might be, one soon became interested in it, and (speaking for myself) I can say that at the longest sitting I never discovered that I was wearied until I arose from my table, and the task was ended."

It should perhaps be added, that this was the only instance in which Sir James Stephen ever transacted official business on a Sunday, except once, when he passed the same day of the week in writing despatches about the Caffre War.

The composition of the Essays contained in the present Volume was almost the only relaxation which their Author enjoyed for many years. He used to write them early in the morning and late at night, or during the occasional holidays which his official occupations afforded. These holidays were, however, very uncommon. For many years he never left London for a month together, and though this was not the case during the last five years of his official life, he transacted business during the summer in the country with exactly the same regularity as in London. It may, therefore, be fairly said that the Essays must not be supposed to give the full measure of the powers of their Author. They merely show the amount of literary exertion of which he was capable, whilst the powers of his mind were principally directed to other pursuits.

A similar observation may be made on the Lectures on the History of France, which were delivered at Cambridge in the summer of 1850 and 1851. They were written under the greatest disadvantages. Sir James Stephen was appointed Professor of Modern History in the summer of 1849. He was prevented by bad health from beginning his Lectures till the autumn. Most of the Lectures which form the first of the two volumes were written between September, 1849, and April, 1850, and they were delivered during the months of April and May. In the summer of 1850 Sir James Stephen had a most severe and dangerous illness, which threatened at one time to assume the form of a brain fever. His physician ordered him to pass the winter in travelling abroad, and, above all things, to abstain from mental labour. He accordingly left England with the intention of visiting Italy, but finding himself stronger than he expected on his arrival at Paris, he passed the rest of the winter there, and during his stay completed the greater part of the second volume of the Lectures, and delivered them at Cambridge in the following summer. The first edition of them was published in 1852.

These facts have been mentioned in order to enable those who take an interest in the matter to form an opinion on the evidence which Sir James Stephen's works supply as to his general capacity. Their object would be entirely mistaken if they were supposed to put forward any claim for posthumous fame on the part of a man whose pursuits withdrew him from the public eye, and who wished for nothing more ardently than for the privacy he enjoyed. There are men who do not understand success in life to include of necessity any very brilliant or general reputation either amongst their contemporaries or their successors. To such persons the opportunity of exerting their powers vigorously, and in a worthy direction, is its own reward, and the opinion which may be formed by others of the result of their exertions is only valuable in so

far as it proceeds upon adequate information as to their character and extent. Judged by this, which in his case was the true standard, Sir James Stephen was a happy and successful man. His life was passed in pursuits which taxed his powers to the utmost, and the manner in which he discharged the duties assigned to him obtained the approbation, and in many instances the warm and generous recognition, of those who were best entitled to have an opinion on the subject. On his retirement from office he had the honour of being made, without any solicitation on his own part, a member of the Privy Council and a Knight of the Bath, whilst both Lord John Russell and the late Sir Robert Peel bore the strongest testimony in the House of Commons to the importance of his public services. Such evidence proves that he did his duty to the public fully and faithfully, and this is the only fact respecting him of which his family wish to publish the proof. It was not the least of the many instances of his prosperity that the retirement in which the busiest part of his life was passed to a great extent protected him, and will no doubt effectually protect his memory, against unjust censure and ignorant praise.

Of Sir James Stephen's private life and personal character nothing is said here, as these are matters with which the public has no concern, and on which the evidence of his son would not be impartial.

JAMES FITZJAMES STEPHEN.

5, Fig-Tree Court, Temple
July 16, 1860.

ESSAYS

IN

ECCLESIASTICAL BIOGRAPHY,

&c.

HILDEBRAND.

HE had been a shrewd, if not a very reverent, observer of human life, who bowed to the fallen statue of Jupiter, by way of bespeaking the favour of the god in the event of his being again lifted on his pedestal. Hildebrand, the very impersonation of Papal arrogance and of Spiritual Despotism (such had long been his historical character), is once more raised up for the homage of the faithful. Dr Arnold vindicates his memory. M. Guizot hails him as the Czar Peter of the Church. Mr Voight, a professor at Halle, celebrates him as the foremost and the most faultless of heroes. Mr Bowden, an Oxford Catholic, reproduces the substance of Mr Voight's eulogy, though without the fire which warms, or the light which irradiates, the pages of his guide. M. Delécluze, and the *Bibliothèque Universelle de Genève*, are elevated by the theme into the region where rhetoric and poetry are conterminous; while M. l'Abbé Jager absolutely shouts with exultation to witness the subsidence, at the voice of Protestants, of those mists which had so long obscured the glory of him by whom the pontifical tiara was exalted far above the crowns of every earthly potentate. Wholly inadequate as are our necessary limits to the completion of such an enquiry, we would fain explore the grounds of this revived worship, and judge how far it may be reasonable to join in offering incense at the shrine of this reinstated *Jupiter ecclesiasticus*.

Except in the annals of Eastern despotisms, no parallel can be found for the disasters of the Papacy during the century and a half which followed the extinction of the Carlovingian dynasty.

Of the twenty-four popes who, during that period, ascended the apostolic throne, two were murdered, five were driven into exile, four were deposed, and three resigned their hazardous dignity. Some of these Vicars of Christ were raised to that awful pre-eminence by arms, and some by money. Two received it from the hands of princely courtesans. One was self-appointed. A well-filled purse purchased one papal abdication; the promise of a fair bride another. One of those holy fathers pillaged the treasury, fled with the spoil, returned to Rome, ejected his substitute, and mutilated him in a manner too revolting for description. In one page of this dismal history, we read of the disinterred corpse of a former Pope brought before his successor to receive a retrospective sentence of deposition; and in the next we find the judge himself undergoing the same posthumous condemnation, though without the same filthy ceremonial. Of these heirs of St Peter, one entered on his infallibility in his eighteenth year, and one before he had seen his twelfth summer. One, again, took to himself a coadjutor, that he might command in person such legions as Rome then sent into the field. Another, Judas-like, agreed for certain pieces of silver to recognise the Patriarch of Constantinople as universal bishop. All sacred things had become venal. Crime and debauchery held revel in the Vatican; while the afflicted Church, wedded at once to three husbands (such was the language of the times), witnessed the celebration of as many rival masses in the metropolis of Christendom. It would be heretical to say that the gates of hell had prevailed against the seat and centre of Catholicism; but Baronius himself might be cited to prove that they had rolled back on their infernal hinges, to send forth malignant spirits commissioned to empty on her devoted head the vials of bitterness and wrath.

How, from this hotbed of corruption, the seeds of a new and prolific life derived their vegetative power, and how, in an age in which the Papacy was surrendered to the scorn and hatred of mankind, the independence of the Holy See on the Imperial Crown became first a practical truth, and then a hallowed theory, are problems over which we may not now linger. Suffice it to say, that in the middle of the eleventh century, Europe once more looked to Rome as the pillar and the ground of the truth; while Rome herself looked forth on a long chain of stately monasteries, rising like distant bulwarks of her power in every land which owned her spiritual rule.

Of these, Clugni was the foremost in numbers, wealth, and piety, and at Clugni, towards the end of the year 1048, Bruno, the

Bishop of Toul, arrayed in all the splendour, and attended by the retinue, of a Pontiff elect, demanded at once the hospitality and the homage of the monks. At the nomination of the Emperor Henry the Third, and in a German synod, he had recently been elected to the vacant Papacy, and was now on his way to Rome, to take possession of the Chair of Peter. Hildebrand, the Prior of Clugni, was distinguished above all his brethren by the holiness of his life, the severity of his self-discipline, and by that ardent zeal to obey which indicates the desire and the ability to command. He was then in the prime of manhood, and his countenance (if his extant portraits may be trusted) announced him as one of those who are born to direct and subjugate the wills of ordinary men. Such a conquest he achieved over him on whose brows the triple crown was then impending. An election made beyond the precincts of the Holy City, and at the bidding of a secular power, was regarded by Hildebrand as a profane title to the seat once occupied by the Prince of the Apostles. At his instance, Bruno laid aside the vestments, the insignia, and the titles of the pontificate; and pursuing his way in the humble garb of a pilgrim to the tomb of Peter, entered Rome with bare feet, and a lowly aspect, and with no attendant (or none discernible by human sense) except the adviser of this politic self-abasement. To Bruno himself indeed was revealed the presence of an angelic choir, who chanted in celestial harmonies the return of peace to the long-afflicted people of Christ. Acclamations less seraphic, but of less doubtful reality, from the Roman clergy and populace, rewarded this acknowledgment of their electoral privileges, and conferred on Leo the Ninth (as he was thenceforth designated) a new, and, as he judged, a better title to the supreme government of the Church.

The reward of the service thus rendered by Hildebrand was prompt and munificent. He was raised to the rank of a Cardinal, and received the offices of sub-deacon of Rome, and superintendent of the church and convent of St Paul.

The Pope and the Cardinal were not less assiduous to soothe, than they had been daring to provoke, the resentment of the Emperor. Bruno became once more a courtier and a pilgrim, while Hildebrand remained in Rome to govern the city and the church. The Pontiff thrice visited the German court, bringing with him papal benedictions to Henry, and papal censures on Henry's rebellious vassals. So grateful and so effective was the aid thus rendered to the monarch, that on his last return to Italy, Leo was permitted to conduct thither a body of Imperial troops, to expel the Norman invaders of the papal territory. At Civitella, however,

the axes of Humphrey and Robert, brothers of William of the Iron-hand, prevailed over the sword and the anathemas of Peter. Whether Hildebrand bore a lance in that bloody field, is debated by his biographers. But no one disputes that he more than divided the fruits of it with the conquerors. To them were conceded the three great fiefs of Calabria, Apulia, and Sicily. To the Holy See was assigned the suzerain^{té} over them. Humiliated and broken-hearted by his defeat, Bruno pined away and died. Strong in this new feudal dominion, and in the allegiance of these warlike vassals, Hildebrand directed his prescient gaze to the distant conflicts and the coming glories in which these Norman liegemen were to minister to his vast designs. The auspicious hour was not yet come. His self-command tranquilly abided the approach of it.

Gebhard, Bishop of Eichstadt, enjoyed the unbounded confidence and affection of Henry. He had ever lent the weight of his personal advice, and the sanction of his episcopal authority, to sustain his friend and master in his opposition to papal encroachments. Yet Gebhard was selected by the discerning Cardinal, as of all men the best qualified to succeed to the vacant Papacy. Hildebrand represented to the Emperor that the choice had been made from an anxious respect for his feelings, and with a loyal desire to promote his interest and his honour. The thoughtful German perceived the net spread for him by the wily Italian. He struggled to avoid it, but in vain. He suggested many other candidates ; but Hildebrand had some conclusive objection to each of them. He urged that Gebhard had been raised, by the favour of Henry himself, to an eminence unassailable by reproach, and beyond the reach of suspicion, and that no other man could boast an equal or a similar advantage. Importuned and flattered, his affections moved but his understanding unconvinced, the emperor at length yielded. If our own second Henry had studied this passage of history, the darkest page of his own had perhaps never been written.

Gebhard became Pope, assumed the title of Victor the Second, adopted, even to exaggeration, the anti-imperial principles of Hildebrand, and rewarded his services by a commission to act as his Legate *a latere* in the kingdom of France. By Victor, this high employment was probably designed as an honourable exile for a patron to whom he had contracted so oppressive a debt of gratitude. But the new Legate was not a man on whom any dignity could fall as a mere unfruitful embellishment. He cited before him the bishops and ecclesiastical dignitaries subjected to his legantine power, and preferred against the whole body one comprehensive charge of simony. Of the accused, one alone stoutly

maintained his innocence. 'Believest thou,' exclaimed the judge, 'that there are three persons of one substance?' 'I do.' 'Then repeat the doxology.' The task was successfully accomplished, until the prelate reached the name of Him whose gift Simon Magus had desired to purchase. That name he could not utter. The culprit cast himself at the Legate's feet, confessed his guilt, and was deposed. More than eighty of his brethren immediately made the same acknowledgment. The rumour spread on every side, that the papal emissary was gifted with a preternatural skill to discern the presence in the human heart of any thoughts of Satanic origin. Popular applause followed the steps of the stern disciplinarian; and the wonder of the ignorant was soon rivalled by the admiration of the learned and the great. Such was the fame of his wisdom, that the claim of Ferdinand of Castile to bear the title of Emperor of Spain, was referred to his abitrament by the Spanish and the German sovereigns. He decided that the imperial name and dignity belonged to Henry and to his heirs, to the exclusion of every other Potentate. Ill had Henry divined the future! Rashly had he consented to hold the honours of his crown by the judicial sentence of a man, who, within twenty years, was to pluck that crown, with every mark of infamy, from the brows of his only son and successor!

When that son ascended the throne of his progenitors, and assumed the kingly title of Henry the Fourth, he was yet a child. Agnes, his widowed mother, became the regent of his dominions, and Victor the guardian of his person. But the Pope soon followed the deceased Emperor to the grave, and another election placed the vacant tiara on the head of Frederick of Lorraine.

Frederick was the brother of Godfrey, who, in right of his wife Beatrice, and during the minority of her daughter Matilda, exercised the authority and enjoyed the title of Duke of Tuscany. His promotion to the Papacy cemented the alliance between the Holy See and the most powerful of those Italian states by which the northern frontier of the papal territories might be either defended or assailed. The choice was, in appearance, the unpremeditated result of a popular tumult. Frederick seemed to be borne to the apostolic throne by the acclamations of a Roman mob, and to be seated there in a half-reluctant acquiescence in their good pleasure. Some excuse was necessary for so flagrant a disregard of the rights of the infant Emperor, and the turbulent enthusiasm of the people was at least a specious apology. But by what informing spirit the rude mass had been agitated was sufficiently disclosed by the first act of the new Pontiff. He had scarcely assumed the title of Stephen the Ninth before he conferred on Hildebrand the dignities

of Cardinal-Archdeacon of Rome, and of Legate at the Imperial Court.

After a reign of eight months, Stephen, conscious of the approach of death, left to the Romans his last injunction to postpone the choice of his successor until the return from Germany of this great dispenser of ecclesiastical promotions. The command was obeyed. The Cardinal-Archdeacon reappeared, bringing with him the consent of the Empress-Regent to the choice of Gerard, Bishop of Florence, another adherent of the ducal house of Tuscany. Gerard accordingly ascended the chair of St Peter. Like each of his three immediate predecessors, he sat there at the nomination of Hildebrand, and, like each of them, he called or permitted his patron to become the one great minister of his reign and director of his measures. At the instance of Hildebrand, Nicholas the Second (so was he now called) summoned a council at which was first effected, in the year 1059, a revolution, the principle of which, at the distance of eight centuries, still flourishes in unimpaired vitality. It, for the first time, conferred on the College of Cardinals the exclusive right of voting at papal elections. It set aside not only the acknowledged rights of the Emperor to confirm, but the still more ancient privilege of the Roman clergy and people to nominate their bishop. For Hildebrand was now strong enough in his Norman alliance to defy that popular power before which so many churchmen had trembled. At his summons Robert Guiscard broke down the fortresses of the Roman counts and barons, who, with their retainers, had been accustomed, in the comitia of papal Rome, to rival the exploits of Clodius and his gladiators. Their authority was subverted for ever, and from that period their name ceases to appear in the history of pontifical elections. The title of Duke, and a recognition of his sovereignty over all the conquests which he had made, or should ever make, rewarded the obedience of the Norman freebooter.

After rendering this service to the cause of sacerdotal independence, Nicholas died. It was a cause which, however much advanced by the profound sagacity and promptitude of Hildebrand, could never finally triumph over its powerful antagonists by any means less hazardous, or less costly, than that of open and protracted war. During the minority of Henry such a conflict could hardly be commenced, still less brought to a decisive issue. The rights of the royal child derived from his very weakness a sanctity in the hearts, and a safeguard in the arms, of his loyal German subjects. The time of mortal struggle was not yet come. The aspiring Cardinal judged that by again resigning to another the

nominal conduct, he could best secure to himself the real guidance, of that impending controversy.

To obtain from the Empress-Regent an assent to the observance by the Sacred College of the new electoral law, was the first object of the conclave which assembled after the death of Nicholas, at the command of Hildebrand. At his instance an envoy was despatched to the Imperial Court, with the offer that the choice should fall on any ecclesiastic whom Agnes might nominate, if she would consent that the Cardinals alone should appear and vote at the ceremonial. The compromise was indignantly rejected. A synod of imperialist prelates was convened at Basil, and by them Cado-lous, Bishop of Parma (the titular Honorius the Second), was elevated to the vacant Papacy. To this defiance Hildebrand and his brother Cardinals answered by the choice of Anselm, Bishop of Lucca, afterwards known in history as Alexander, the second of that name. After a brief but sanguinary conflict in the open field, each of the rival Popes, at the mediation of Godfrey, retired from Rome to his diocese, there to await the judgment of a future council on their pretensions. But Alexander did not quit the city until he had acknowledged and rewarded the services of the head and leader of his cause. Hildebrand now received the office of Chancellor of the Holy See, the best and the highest recompense which he could earn by raising others to supreme ecclesiastical dominion. Two successive councils confirmed the election of Alexander, who continued, during twelve years, to rule the Church with dignity, if not in peace.

The time had at length arrived when Hildebrand was to receive the high and hazardous reward which his unfaltering hopes had so long contemplated, and his self-controlling policy so often declined. Leo, Victor, Stephen, Nicholas, and Alexander, had each been indebted to his authority for the pontificate, and to his counsels for the policy with which it had been administered. Successively Cardinal-Deacon, Archdeacon, Legate, and Chancellor of the Apostolic See, one height alone was yet to be scaled. In the great church of the Lateran the corpse of Alexander was extended on the bier. A solemn requiem commended to the Supreme Judge the soul of the departed, when the plaintive strain was broken by a shout, which, rising, as it seemed, spontaneously and without concert from every part of the crowded edifice, proclaimed that, by the will of the Holy Peter himself, the Cardinal-Chancellor was Pope. From the funeral procession Hildebrand flew to the pulpit. With impassioned gestures, and in a voice inaudible amidst the uproar, he seemed to be imploring silence; but the tempest was

not to be allayed until one of the Cardinals announced, in the name of the Sacred College, their unanimous election of him whom the Apostle and the multitude had thus simultaneously chosen. Crowned with the tiara, and arrayed in the gorgeous robes of a Pope-elect, Gregory the Seventh was then presented to the people. Their joyous exultation and the pomp of the inaugural ceremonies blended and contrasted strangely with the studied gloom and the melancholy dirge of the funeral rites.

That this electoral drama was a mere improvisation, may be credited by those before whose faith all the mountains of improbability give way. But thus to reach the summit of sacerdotal dominion as if by constraint; and thus, without forfeiting the praise of severe sanctity, to obtain the highest of this world's dignities; and thus to anticipate and defeat the too probable resistance of the Imperial Court; and thus to afford the Cardinals the opportunity and the excuse for the prompt exercise of their yet precarious electoral privilege—was a combination and a coincidence of felicities such as fortune, unaided by policy, seldom, if ever, bestows even on her choicest favourites. He who had nominated five Popes, was, assuredly, no passive instrument in his own nomination. His letters, written on the occasion, would alone be sufficient to prove, if proof were wanting, that a career thus far guided by the most profound sagacity, was not abandoned at its crisis to the caprice of a dissolute multitude. To several of his correspondents he addressed pathetic descriptions of his alarm and sorrow, but with such a remarkable uniformity of terms as to force on the reader of them the belief that the elegiac strain was repeated as often as necessary by his secretaries, with such variations as their taste suggested. To the Emperor he breathed nothing but submission and humility. The most unimpeachable decorum presided over the whole of the ceremonial that followed. Envoys passed and repassed. Men of grave aspect instituted tedious enquiries. Solemn notaries attested prolix reports; and in due time the world was informed that, of his grace and clemency, Henry, King of Germany and Italy, calling himself Emperor, had ratified the election of his dearly beloved father, Gregory the Seventh—the world, meanwhile, well knowing that, despite the Emperor's hostility, the Pope was able and resolved to maintain his own; and that the Emperor would, if possible, have driven the Pope from Rome, as the most dangerous of rebels and the most subtle of usurpers.

But Henry was ill prepared for such an effort. During the first six years of his reign the affairs of his vast hereditary empire had been conducted by his widowed mother. She was formed to love,

to reverence, and to obey. In an age less rude, or in a station less exalted, her much long-suffering, her self-sustaining dignity, and the tenderness of her gentle spirit, might have enabled her to win the obedience of the heart. But her mind was ductile, her conscience enfeebled by a morbid sensibility, and her character formed by nature and by habit for subservience to any form of superstitious terror. She was surrounded by rapacious nobles whom no sacrifices could conciliate, and by lordly churchmen, who at once exacted and betrayed her confidence. Though severely virtuous, she was assailed by shameless calumnies. Her female rule was resented by the pride of Teutonic chivalry; and fraud and violence combined to inflict the deepest wound on her rights as a sovereign and her feelings as a mother.

At Kaiserworth, on the Rhine, Agnes and her son, then in his thirteenth year, were reposing from the fatigues of an imperial progress. A galley, impelled by long lines of oars, and embellished with every ornament which art and luxury could command, appeared on the broad stream before them. Attended by a train of lords and servitors, Anno, the Archbishop of Cologne, descended from the gallant barge, and pressed the royal youth to inspect so superb a specimen of aquatic architecture and episcopal magnificence. Henry gladly complied, and, as the rowers bent to their oars, he enjoyed with boyish delight the rapidity with which one object after another receded from his view, till turning to the companions of what had hitherto seemed a mere holiday voyage, he read in the anxious countenances of the commanders, and the vehement efforts of the boatmen, that he was a prisoner, and more than ever an orphan. With characteristic decision, he at once plunged into the water, and endeavoured to swim to shore; but the toils were upon him. A confederacy, formed by the Archbishops of Cologne and Mentz, and supported by the Dukes of Bavaria and Tuscany, consigned their young sovereign to a captivity at once sumptuous and debilitating. They usurped the powers, and plundered the treasures, of the crown. They bestowed on themselves and their adherents forests, manors, abbeys, and lordships. But to the future ruler of so many nations they denied the discipline befitting his age, and the instruction due to his high prospects. They encouraged him, and with fatal success, to enervate by ceaseless amusement, and to debase by precocious debauchery, a mind naturally brave and generous. Anno has been canonised by the See of Rome. By the same ghostly tribunal, the monarch whom he kidnapped, betrayed, and corrupted, was excluded from the communion of the Church when living, and from her consecrated soil when dead. Impartial

history will reverse either sentence, and will pronounce her anathemas rather on St Anno, by whom the princely boy was exposed to the furnace of temptation, than on him in whose young mind the seeds of vice, so unsparingly sown, sprung up with such deadly luxuriance.

The heart of youth was never won by habitual indulgence. As Henry advanced towards manhood, the Archbishops of Cologne and Mentz discovered that they were the objects of his settled antipathy, and that they had to dread the full weight of a resentment at once just, vindictive, and unscrupulous. To avert that danger they transferred the charge of the royal youth to Adalbert, Archbishop of Bremen, rightly judging that his skill in courtly arts (for he had lived on affectionate terms with the deceased emperor) might enable him to win his pupil's regard, but erroneously believing that his ecclesiastical zeal (for it seemed the master passion of his soul) would induce him to employ that advantage in the defence and service of the hierarchy.

Adalbert, whose life is written in the Church History of Adam of Bremen, was a man whose character was so strangely composite, and whose purposes were so immutably single, that he might have suggested portraits to Scott, epigrams to Young, antitheses to Pope, an analysis to Dryden, or to Shakspeare himself some rich and all-reconciling harmony. According to the aspect in which he was viewed, he might with equal justice be regarded as a saint or a man of pleasure, as a scholar or a courtier, as a politician or a wit. Now washing the feet of beggars, eloquently expounding Christian truth, or indignantly denouncing the sins of the rich and the great, the shifting scene exhibited him amidst a throng of actors, jugglers, and buffoons, or as the soul and centre of a society where lords and ambassadors, prelates and priests of low degree, met to enjoy his good cheer, to partake of his merriment, and to endure his relentless sarcasms. At the very moment when, with irresistible address, he was insinuating himself into the favour of some potent count or bishop, the approach of another dignitary would rouse him to bitter and unmeasured invective. From the laughing playfellow of his companions he would pass at once into their fierce assailant, and then atone for the extravagance of his passion by a bounty not less extravagant. But whether he preached or gave alms, whether philosophy, or fun, or satire, was his passing whim, he still enjoyed one luxury which habit had rendered indispensable. Parasites were ever at hand to confirm his own conviction, that Adalbert of Bremen was an universal genius, and that, under his fostering care,

the see of Bremen was destined to become the northern capital of the universal Church.

Nor was it strange that he believed them. Of the countless victims of self-idolatry, few have had so many seductions to that intoxicating worship. A military as well as an ecclesiastical prince, he witnessed the extension of his archiepiscopal dominion far along the shores of the Elbe and the Baltic. Kings solicited his personal friendship. Sweden and the Empire accepted him as the mediator of peace. Envoys from every state in Europe, not excepting Constantinople, thronged his palace. He was at once the confidential adviser of the Pope and the chief minister of the Emperor, and even boasted (with whatever truth) that he had declined the Papacy itself. But this earlier Wolsey, like his great antitype, longed for some imperishable monument of his glory. Bremen was the Ipswich of Adalbert; the site selected, but in vain, for perpetuating to the remotest ages the memory of an ambition less ennobled by the greatness of its aims, than debased by an insatiable vanity. To aggrandise his diocese he builded and fortified, negotiated and intrigued; became by turns a suitor and an oppressor; conciliated attachments and braved enmities; and lived and died the imaginary patriarch of the imaginary patriarchate of the German and Scandinavian nations.

Brightly dawned on the young Henry the day which transferred the charge of his person and of his education from the austere Anno to the princely Adalbert. The Archbishop of Cologne had rebuked the vices he indulged. The stouter conscience of the Archbishop of Bremen stood in need of no such self-soothing compromise. He fairly threw the reins on the neck of his royal charge, who invoked the aid of young and profligate companions in the use or the abuse of this welcome indulgence. His tutors had sown the wind; his people were now to reap the whirlwind. Of the domestic life of the young Emperor, the dark tale recorded by the chroniclers of his age would not be endured by the delicacy of our own. His public acts might seem to have been prompted by the determination to exasperate to madness the national pride, the moral sense, and the religious feelings of his subjects. Yet even when they were thus provoked, their resentment slumbered. A popular address, a noble presence, and the indulgence so liberally yielded to the excesses of the great, the prosperous, and the young, gave scope for the full expansion of his crimes and follies. At the Lateran, the influence of his personal qualities was unfelt. Roused to a just indignation by the frequent intelligence of a life so debauched and

of a reign so impious, Alexander cited the Emperor to appear at Rome, there to answer in person to the apostolic throne for the simony and the other offences imputed to him. The voice was Alexander's voice, but the hand was the hand of Gregory.

Between the day on which Hildebrand had conducted Leo the Ninth into Rome as a simple pilgrim, to the time of his own tumultuary election, the quarter of a century had intervened. During the whole of that period he had been the confidential minister and guide of the Papacy. In each of the five pontificates which he nominally served, and really governed, the Holy See had pursued the same aggressive policy, with a steadfastness indicating the guidance of one far-seeing mind, gifted with patience to await, with promptitude to discern, and with courage to seize, the moments of successful advance. When, therefore, the citation of Henry was issued in the name of the dying Pope, none doubted that this audacious act, then without a parallel in history, had been dictated by the same stern and unrelenting councillor. When tidings reached the Imperial Court that the voice of the people and the votes of the cardinals had placed in Gregory's hands the mysterious keys and the sharp sword of Peter, none doubted the near approach of the conflict which was to assign the supreme dominion over the Christian world either to the German sceptre or to the Roman crosier. That, after ages of war and controversy, they should peacefully exercise a concurrent yet divided rule, would have seemed an idle dream to a generation, whose feudal theory of government had for its basis the principle of various gradations of dependency on some one common head, or suzerain.

With a life stained by no sensual or malignant crime (a praise of which his contemporary and rancorous biographer, Cardinal Benno, is the reluctant and unconscious witness), and degraded by the pursuit of no ends exclusively selfish (for, except as the champion of the Church, he neither obtained nor sought any personal aggrandisement), Pope Hildebrand yielded himself freely to the current of those awful thoughts which have peopled the brain of each in turn of the successors of Peter, the basest and the most impure of them scarcely excepted. A mystery to himself, he had become the supreme vicar of Christ on earth; the predestined heir of a throne among those saints who should one day judge the world; the mortal head of an immortal dynasty; the depository of a power delegated yet divine; the viceroy to whom had been entrusted by God himself the care of interests, and the dispensation of blessings and of curses, which, by comparison, reduced to inappreciable vanities all the good and evil of this transitory world. Resolute as he was, he appears

to have trembled at the contrast between the weakness of his human nature and the weight of these majestic responsibilities. With the Abbots of Clugni and of Monte Cassino he maintained a relation as much resembling friendship as was compatible with the austerity of his nature and of his habits; and to them he depicted the secret tumults of his mind, in terms of which it would be impossible to deny either the sincerity or the eloquence.

Before his prophetic eye arose a vast theocratic state in which political and religious society were to be harmonised, or rather were to be absorbed into each other. At the head of this all-embracing polity, the Bishop of Rome was to assert his legitimate authority over all the kings and rulers of the earth. In immediate dependence on him was to be ranged the circle of his liege spiritual lords—some residing at the seat of empire as electors, councillors, and ministers to the supreme potentate; others presiding over the fraternities, the provinces, and the sees of which his empire was to be composed. At the capital of this hierarchal state were to be exercised the various powers of government—legislative, administrative, and judicial. There also were to be held the occasional meetings of the extraordinary or ecumenical legislature. To the infallible sovereign of this new Jerusalem were to be assigned prerogatives limited only by his own conscience, and restrained by no power but that of God himself. To the Emperor, the Kings, the Dukes, and Counts, his feudatories, was to be entrusted a ministry altogether subordinate and auxiliary to his. They were to maintain order, to command armies, to collect revenues, to dispense justice. But they were to hold their crowns or coronets at the pleasure of the Autocrat, to justify to him the use of their inferior authority, and to employ it in support of his power, which, as it was derived from heaven itself, could acknowledge no superior, equal, or competitor on earth. But woe—such woe as vengeance, almighty and unrelenting, could inflict—on him who, wielding the pontifical sceptre in the sacred name of Christ, should impiously use it in any spirit, or for any ends, not in accordance with these awful purposes which once made Christ himself a sojourner among men! Heathen Rome had been raised up to conquer and to civilise. To Christian Rome was appointed a far loftier destiny. It was hers to mediate between hostile nations—to reconcile sovereigns and their people—to superintend the policy, restrain the ambition, redress the injustice, and punish the crimes of princes—and to render the Apostolic Throne the source and centre of an holy influence, which, diffused through every member of the social body, should inform, and animate, and amalgamate the whole, and realise the inspired delineation of that

yet unborn age, when the lion and the lamb should lie down together, with a little child their leader.

Sublime as were the visions which thus thronged on the soul of Gregory the Seventh, and which still shed a glowing light over his three hundred and fifty extant letters, life was never, for a single day, a state of mere visionary existence to him. Before him lay the approaching struggle with Henry, with Honorius, with the ecclesiastics of Lombardy, with the German people, whose loyalty had so long survived the sorest provocation, and even with many of the German prelates, who ascribed to the successor of Charlemagne and of Otho the same rights which these great monarchs had exercised over the Pontiffs of an earlier generation. Nor was he unconscious that the way for his theocracy must be paved by reforms so painful, as to convert into inexorable antagonists a large number of those on whose attachment to his person and his laws he might otherwise have most implicitly relied.

Yet it was with no doubtful prospects of success that he girded himself for the battle. His Norman feudatories to the south, and his Tuscan alliance to the north, promised security to the papal city. Disaffection was widely spread among the commonality of the Empire. The Saxons were on the verge of revolt. The Dukes of Swabia, Carinthia, and Bavaria were brooding over insufferable wrongs. From the young and debauched Emperor, it seemed idle to dread any resolved or formidable hostility. From the other powers of Europe Henry could expect no succour. From every region of Christendom, the Church, in a voice which, though inarticulate, was audible to the Supreme Pontiff, invoked a remedy for the traffic in holy things, and for the fearful pollutions beneath which she was groaning; and that heavenly Bride assured him that when he should have strangled the monsters of iniquity by whom she was oppressed, he should be recompensed by every honour which man could confer, and by every benediction which God bestows on his most favoured servants. He heard, and he obeyed.

From the most remote Christian antiquity, the marriage of clergymen had been regarded with the dislike, and their celibacy rewarded by the commendation, of the people. Among the ecclesiastical heroes of the first four centuries, it is scarcely possible to point to one who was not, in this respect, an imitator of Paul rather than of Peter. Among the ecclesiastical writers of those times, it is scarcely possible to refer to one by whom the superior sanctity of the unmarried to the conjugal state is not either directly inculcated or tacitly assumed. This prevailing sentiment had ripened into a customary law, and the observance of that custom had been

enforced by edicts and menaces, by rewards and penalties. But nature had triumphed over tradition, and had proved too strong for Councils and for Popes.

When Hildebrand ascended the chair first occupied by a married Apostle, his spirit burned within him to see that marriage held in her impure and unhallowed bonds a large proportion of those who ministered at the altar, and who handled there the very substance of the incarnate Deity. It was a profanation well adapted to arouse the jealousy, not less than to wound the conscience, of the Pontiff. Secular cares suited ill with the stern duties of a theocratic ministry. Domestic affections would choke or enervate that corporate passion which might otherwise be directed with unmitigated ardour towards their chief and centre. Clerical celibacy, on the other hand, would exhibit to those who trod the outer courts of the great Christian temple, the impressive image of a transcendental perfection, too pure not only for the coarser delights of sense, but even for the alloy of conjugal or parental love. It would fill the world with adherents of Rome, in whom every feeling would be quenched which could rival that sacred allegiance. From every monastery might be summoned a phalanx of allies to overpower the more numerous, but dispersed and feeble, antagonists of such an innovation. In every mitred churchman it would find an active partisan. The people, ever rigid in exacting eminent virtue from their teachers, would be rude but effective zealots of a ghostly discipline from which they were themselves to be exempt.

With such anticipations, Gregory, within a few weeks from his accession, convened a council at the Lateran, and proposed a law, not, as formerly, forbidding the marriage of priests, but commanding every priest to put away his wife, and requiring all laymen to absent themselves from any sacred office which any wedded priest might presume to celebrate. Never was legislative foresight so verified by the result. What the great Council of Nicæa had attempted in vain, the Bishops assembled in the presence of Hildebrand accomplished, at his instance, at once, effectually, and for ever. Lamentable indeed were the complaints, and bitter the reproaches, of the sufferers. 'Were the most sacred ties thus to be torn asunder at the ruthless bidding of an Italian priest? Were men to become angels, or were angels to be brought down from heaven to minister among men?' Eloquence was never more pathetic, more just, or more unavailing. Prelate after prelate silenced these remonstrances by austere rebukes. Legate after legate arrived with papal menaces to the remonstrants. Monks and abbots preached the continency which they at least professed. Kings and barons laughed over their cups at many a merry

tale of compulsory divorce. Mobs pelted, hooted, and besmeared with profane and filthy baptisms the unhappy victims of pontifical rigour. It was a struggle not to be prolonged. Broken hearts pined and died away in silence. Expostulations subsided into murmurs, and murmurs were drowned in the general shout of victory. Eight hundred years have since passed away. Amidst the wreck of laws, opinions, and institutions, this decree of Hildebrand's at this day rules the Latin Church, in every land where sacrifices are still offered on her altars. Among us, but not of us,—valuing their rights as citizens, chiefly as instrumental to their powers as churchmen—ministers of love, to whom the heart of a husband and a father is an inscrutable mystery—teachers of duties, the most sacred of which they may not practise—compelled daily to gaze on the most polluted imagery of man's fallen heart, but denied the refuge of nature from a polluted imagination—professors of a virtue of which, from the death of the righteous Abel down to the birth of the fervent Peter, no solitary example is recorded in Holy Writ—excluded from that posthumous life in remote descendants, in the devout anticipation of which the patriarchs were enabled to walk meekly, but exultingly, with their God—the sacerdotal caste yet flourishes in every Christian land, the imperishable and gloomy monument both of that far-sighted genius which thus devised the means of papal despotism, and of that short-sighted wisdom which proposed to itself that despotism as a legitimate and a laudable end.

With this Spartan rigour towards his adherents, Gregory combined a more than Athenian address and audacity towards his rivals and antagonists. So long as the monarchs of the West might freely bestow on the objects of their choice the sees and abbeys of their states, papal dominion could be but a passing dream, and papal independency an empty boast. Corrupt motives usually determined their choice; and the objects of it were but seldom worthy. Ecclesiastical dignities were often sold to the highest bidder, and then the purchaser indemnified himself by a use no less mercenary of his own patronage: or they were given as a reward to some martial retainer, and the new churchman could not forget that he had once been a soldier. The cope and the coat-of-mail were worn alternately. The same hand bore the crucifix in the holy festival, and the sword in the day of battle. Episcopal warriors and abbatial courtiers thus learned to regard themselves rather as feudatories holding of their temporal lord, than as liegemen owing obedience to their spiritual chief. In the hands of the newly consecrated Bishop was placed a staff, and on his finger a ring, which, received as they were from his temporal sovereign, proclaimed that homage and fealty were due to

him alone. And thus the sacerdotal Proconsuls of Rome became, in sentiment at least, and by the powerful obligation of honour, the vicegerents, not of the Pontifex Maximus, but of the Emperor.

To dissolve this *trinoda necessitas* of simoniacal preferments, military service, and feudal vassalage, a feebler spirit would have exhorted, negotiated, and compromised. To Gregory it belonged first to subdue men by courage, and then to rule them by reverence. Addressing the world in the language of his generation, he proclaimed to every potentate, from the Baltic to the Straits of Calpé, that all human authority being holden of the divine, and God himself having delegated his own sovereignty over men to the Prince of the Sacred College, a divine right to universal obedience was the inalienable attribute of the Roman Pontiffs, of whom, as the supreme earthly suzerain, emperors and kings held their crowns, patriarchs and bishops their mitres ; and held them not mediately through each other, but immediately, as tenants *in capite*, from the one legitimate representative of the great Apostle.

In turning over the collection of the epistles of Hildebrand, we are everywhere met by this doctrine asserted in a tone of the calmest dignity and the most serene conviction. Thus he informs the French monarch that every house in his kingdom owed to Peter, as their father and pastor, an annual tribute of a penny, and he commands his legates to collect it in token of the subjection of France to the Holy See. He assures Solomon, the King of Hungary, that his territories are the property of the Holy Roman Church. Solomon being incredulous and refractory, was dethroned by his competitor for the Hungarian crown. His more prudent successor, Ladislaus, acknowledged himself the vassal of the Pope, and paid him tribute. To Corsica a legate was sent to govern the demesnes of the Papacy in the island, and to recover the rest of it from the Saracens. To the Sardinians an account was despatched of Gregory's title to their obedience, with menaces of a Norman invasion if it should be withheld. On Demetrius, Duke of Dalmatia, we find him conferring the kingly title, reserving a yearly payment of two hundred pieces of silver 'to the holy Pope Gregory and his successors lawfully elected, as supreme lords of the Dalmatian kingdom.' Among the visitors of Rome was a youth, described in one of these epistles as son of the King of Russia. The letter informs the sovereign so designated, that, at the request of the young Prince, the Pontiff had administered to him the oath of fealty to St Peter and his successors, not doubting that 'it would be approved by the king and all the lords of his kingdom, since the Apostle would henceforth regard their country as his own, and defend it accordingly.' From Sweno the

Dane he exacted a promise of subjection. From the recently converted Polanders he demanded and received, as sovereign lord of the country, an annual tribute of a hundred marks in silver. From every part of the European continent Bishops were summoned by these imperial missives to Rome, and there were either condemned and deposed, or absolved and confirmed in their sees. In France, in Spain, and in Germany, we find his legates exercising the same power; and the correspondence records many a stern rebuke, sometimes for their undue remissness, sometimes for their misapplied severity. The rescripts of Trajan scarcely exhibit a firmer assurance both of the right and the power to control every other authority, whether secular or sacerdotal, throughout the civilised world.

There was, however, in the case of the Normans, a memorable exception. Robert the Norman, conqueror of Sicily, and William the Norman, conqueror of England, steeped in blood and sacrilege, were the most shameless and cruel of usurpers. The groans and curses of the oppressed cried aloud for vengeance against them. But the apostolic indignation, though roused by the active vices of the Emperor, and by the apathetic depravity of Philip of France, had for these tyrants no menaces of wrath, no exhortations to repentance. Robert was embraced and honoured as the faithful ally of Rome. William was addressed in the blandest accents of esteem and tenderness. 'You exhibit towards us' (such is the style) 'the attachment of a dutiful son, yea, of a son whose heart is moved by the love of his mother. Therefore, my beloved son, let your conduct be all that your language has been. Let what you have promised be effectually performed.' The injunction was not disobeyed; for even of promises the grim conqueror of the North had been sufficiently parsimonious. As Duke of Normandy, he remitted to the Pope the amount of certain dues. As King of England, he indignantly refused the required oath of fealty. 'I hold my kingdom of God and of my sword,' was his stern and decisive answer. Something the papal legate dared to mutter of the worthlessness of gold without obedience; but the gold was accepted, and the disobedience endured. These were not the days of John, surnamed Lackland; and for Innocent the Third was reserved, by his great predecessor, the glory of receiving, from an English sovereign on his bended knee, the crown which, while it rested on the head of William, challenged equal honours with the papal tiara. For concessions more favourable to his hopes of unlimited dominion, the Pontiff turned to a sovereign whose crimes no triumphs had sanctified, and no heroism redeemed.

Alexander's citation had been despised by Henry, and was not revived by Hildebrand. Every post from Germany brought fresh

proof that, without the use of weapons so hazardous, the Emperor must, ere long, be reduced to solicit the aid of Rome on such terms as Rome might see fit to dictate. Dark as were the middle ages, the German court had light enough (if we may credit the chroniclers) to anticipate our own enlightened Irish policy. The ancient chiefs of Saxony were imprisoned, and their estates confiscated and granted to absent lords and prelates. Tithe proctors hovered like birds of prey over the Saxon fields. A project was formed for driving the ancient inhabitants into a Saxon pale, and for converting the land into a great Swabian Colony. Castles frowned on every height. Their garrisons pillaged and enslaved the helpless people. Alliances were formed with the Bavarian and the Dane to crush a race hated for their former pre-eminence, and despised for their recent sufferings. Nothing was wanting to complete the parallel but discord and dejection amongst the intended victims.

Groaning under the oppressions, and penetrating the designs of their sovereign, the Saxons solicited for their leaders an audience at Goslar. The appointed day arrived. The deputies presented themselves at the palace. Henry was engaged at a game of hazard, and bade them wait till he had played it out. A stern and indignant demand for justice repelled the insult. A second time, in all the insolence of youth, Henry returned a contemptuous answer. In a few hours he found himself blockaded at his castle of Hartzburg by a vast assemblage of armed men, under the command of Otho of Nordheim, the Tell or Hofer of his native land.

Escaping with difficulty, the Emperor traversed Western Germany to collect forces for crushing the Saxon insurgents. But the spell of his Imperial name, and of his noble presence, was broken. The crimes of a defeated fugitive were unpardonable. His allies made common cause with the Saxons, whom they had so lately leagued to destroy. Long repressed resentment burst out in the grossest indignities against the recreant sovereign. Unworthy to wear his spurs or his crown (so ran the popular arraignment), he descended at a step from the summit of human greatness to the condition of an outcast from human society. A diet had been summoned for his deposition. His sceptre had been offered to Rudolf of Swabia. A few days more, and his crown, if not his life, would have been forfeited, when an opportune illness, and a rumour of his death, awakened among his subjects the dormant feelings of attachment and compassion. Haggard from disease, abject in appearance, destitute, deserted, and unhappy, he presented himself to the citizens of Worms. The ebbing tide of loyalty rushed violently back into its wonted channels. Shouts of welcome ran along the walls. Every

house-top rang with acclamations. Women wept over his wrongs. Men-at-arms devoted their lives, and rich burghers their purses, to his cause. The diet was dissolved, Rudolf fled, and it remained for Henry to practise, on his recovered throne, the lessons he had learned in the school of adversity.

Those lessons had been unfolded and enforced by the parental admonitions of Gregory. The royal penitent answered by promises of amendment, 'full' (as the Pope declared) 'of sweetness and of duty.' Nor was this a mere lip homage. To prove his sincerity, he abandoned to the Pope the government of the great see and city of Milan, the strongest hold of the Imperialists in Italy. A single desire engrossed the heart of Henry. No sacrifice seemed too costly which might enable him to inflict an overwhelming vengeance on the Saxon people; no price excessive by which he could purchase the aid, or at least the neutrality, of Hildebrand in the impending struggle. The concessions were accepted by the Pope, the motive understood, and the equivalent rendered. With gracious words to the Emperor and to Rudolf, with pacific counsels and vague promises to the Saxons, Hildebrand retired from all further intervention in a strife of which it remained for him to watch the issue, and to reap the advantage.

It was in the depth of a severe winter that Henry, hoping to surprise the insurgents, marched from Worms at the head of forces furnished by the wealth and zeal of that faithful city. Drifts of snow obstructed his advance. The frozen streams could no longer turn the mills on which he depended for subsistence. Meteors blazed in the skies, and the dispirited soldiers trembled at such accumulated omens of disaster. In that anxious host, one bosom alone was heedless of danger, and unconscious of suffering. He, who had hitherto been known as a profligate and luxurious youth, now urged on his followers through cold, disease, and famine, to the Saxon frontier. But there Otho awaited him at the head of a large and well-disciplined army. The Imperialists declined the unequal encounter. Again Henry was reduced to capitulate. Humbled a second time before his subjects, he bound himself to dismantle his fortresses, to withdraw his garrisons, to restore the confiscated fiefs, to confirm their ancient Saxon privileges, and to grant an amnesty unlimited and universal.

The treaty of Gerstungen (so it was called) was dictated by animosity and distrust, and was carried into execution by the conquerors in the spirit of vindictive triumph. They expelled from his residence at Goslar their dejected king and his household, and destroyed the town of Hartzburg with his royal sepulchre, where

lay the bones of his infant son, and of others of his nearest kindred. The graves were broken open, and their ghastly contents exposed to shameful and inhuman contumelies—a wild revenge, and a too plausible pretext for a fearful and not distant retribution.

Henry returned to his Rhenish provinces to meditate vengeance. Reckless of any remoter danger in which the indulgence of that fierce passion might involve him, he invoked the arbitrament of the Pope, and called on him to excommunicate the sacrilegious race who had burned the church, and desecrated the sepulchres, of his forefathers. Gregory watched the gathering tempest of civil war, received the appeals of the contending parties, and answered both by renewed injunctions of obedience to himself. To the Saxons he sent homilies; to the Emperor an embassy, graced by the name and the presence of his mother, Agnes. She bore a papal mandate to her son to enforce the celibacy of the clergy, and to restore to its lawful channels the patronage of the Church. Henry promised obedience. The legates then convoked a national synod, to be held in Germany under their own presidency. To this encroachment also, Henry submitted. A remonstrance against it from the Archbishop of Bremen was answered by a legatine sentence suspending him from his see. Still the Emperor was passive. Another sentence of the papal ambassadors exiled from the court and presence of Henry five of his councillors whom Alexander had excommunicated. No signal of resistance was given by their insulted sovereign. Edicts for the government of the Teutonic Church were promulgated without the usual courtesy of asking his concurrence. They provoked from him no show of resentment. Their work accomplished, the legates returned to Rome, the messengers of successes over the authority of the Cæsar, more important than any former Pope had ventured to anticipate. Applause, honours, and preferments rewarded the associates of Agnes; while to herself were given assurances of celestial joy, and of a distinguished place among the choristers of heaven.

Her less aspiring son fed his mind with hopes of vengeance, rendered as he thought more sure by all his concessions to the Roman Pontiff. Twice, indeed, he had recoiled ignominiously from the Saxon frontier. But from defeat itself he might draw the means of victory. By the great feudatories of the Empire, the spectacle of armed peasants and wealthy burghers imposing terms of peace on the successor of Charlemagne, had been regarded with proud scorn and indignation. They resented the rising fame and influence of Otho. He and his followers might become strong enough to resume by arms the estates they had lost by confiscation. Rumours

were already rife of such designs. To fan these flames and deepen these alarms, and thus to excite among restless chiefs and predatory bands the appetite for war and plunder, became the easy and successful labour of the impatient Emperor. At Henry's summons, the whole strength of Germany was collected on the Elbe to crush, in his quarrel, the power they had so lately aided to depose him. There were to be seen the crucifix of the Abbot of Fulda, and there the sacred banner of the Archbishop of Mentz. There Guelph, the Bavarian, raised his ducal standard to reconquer the broad lands restored to their former owners by the treaty of Gerstungen. There, surrounded by the chivalry of Lorraine, and restored by the Emperor to that forfeited principality, Godfrey repaid the boon by the desertion of the alliance, conjugal as well as political, which bound him to the House of Tuscany. There appeared the king of Hungary, lured by the hope of new provinces to be assigned to him on the dismemberment of Saxony. And there, in the centre of countless pennons, came Rudolf, to prove his loyalty to the prince whose throne he had so recently endeavoured to usurp.

The tide of war rolled on towards the devoted land. It had been saved, if penitence, humility, and prayer were of the same power in the courts of earth as in those of heaven. It had been saved, if courage gathered from despair, and guided by patriotism, could have availed against such a confederacy of numbers and of discipline. But prayer was vain, and patriotism impotent. A long summer's day had reached its close, when, under the command of their great leader Otho, the Saxon lines approached the Unstrut. On the opposite banks of that stream the Imperialists had already encamped. Neither army was aware of the vicinity of the other, and Henry had retired to rest, when Rudolf roused him with the intelligence that the insurgent forces were at hand, unarmed, and heedless of their danger, the ready prey of a sudden and immediate attack. The Emperor threw himself in a transport of gratitude at the feet of his adviser, and, leaping on his horse, led forward his forces to the promised victory.

In this strange world of ours, tragedies, of which the dire plot and dark catastrophe might seem to be borrowed from hell, are not seldom depicted by historical dramatists in colours clear and brilliant as those which may be imagined to repose over Paradise. One of the mitred combatants has sung, and Lambert, the chronicler of Aschafnaburg, has narrated the battle of the Unstrut. The Bishop's hexameters have all the charm which usually belongs to episcopal charges. But Lambert is among the most graphic and animated of historians. His picture of the field glows with his own military

ardour, and is thronged with incidents and with figures which might well be transferred to the real canvas. Among them we distinguish the ill-arranged Saxon lines broken, flying, and again forming at the voice of Otho as it rises above the tumult, and then rushing after him with naked swords, and naked bosoms, on the main battle of the triumphant invaders. And still the eye follows Otho wherever there are fainting hearts to rally, or a fierce onslaught to repel ;—and we seem almost to hear the shrill war-cry of the Swabians from the van of the Imperial host, where, by a proud hereditary right, they had claimed to stand ;—and Rudolf their leader, the very minister of death, is ever in the midst of the carnage, himself, as if in covenant with the grave, unharmed ;—and in the agony and crisis of the strife, Henry, the idol to whom this bloody sacrifice is offered, is seen in Lambert's battle-piece leaping at the head of his reserve on his exhausted enemies, sweeping whole ranks into confused masses, and amid shrieks, and groans, and fruitless prayers, and fruitless curses, immolating them to his insatiable revenge.

The sun went down on that Aceldama amidst the exultations of the victorious allies. It rose on them the following morning agitated by grief, by discord, and by disaffection. Many nobles who had fought the day before under the Imperial banner, were stretched on the field of battle. The enthusiasm of the Saxons had proved at how fearful a price, if at all, the selfish ends of the confederacy must be attained. They mourned the extinction of one of the eyes of Germany. Silently but rapidly the armament dissolved. Godfrey alone remained to prosecute the war. With his aid it was brought by Henry to a successful issue. A capitulation placed Otho and the other leaders in the Emperor's power. With their persons secured, their estates forfeited, and their resources destroyed, he returned to join with the loyal citizens of Worms in chanting the 'Te Deum laudamus.' The same sacred strain had but a few days before celebrated at Rome a still more important and enduring victory.

Gregory had rightly judged, that while the rival princes were immersed in civil war, he might securely convene the princes of the Church to give effect to designs of far deeper significance. The long aisles of the Lateran were crowded with grave Canonists and mitred Abbots, with Bishops and Cardinals, with the high functionaries, and the humble apparitors, of the Papal State. Proudly eminent above them all, sat the Vicar and Vicegerent of the King of kings. Masses were sung, and homilies were delivered, and rites were performed, of which the origin might be traced back to the worship of the Capitoline Jove ; and then was enacted, by the ecclesiastical

Senate, a law, not unlike the most arrogant of those which eleven centuries before had been promulgated in the Capitol. It forbade the kings and rulers of the earth to exercise their ancient right of investiture of any spiritual dignitary, and transferred to the Pope alone a patronage and an influence more than sufficient to balance, within their own dominions, all the powers of all the monarchs of Christendom. In the darkest hours of Imperial despotism, the successors of Julius had never enjoyed, or demanded, an authority so wide or so absolute. Even the daring spirit by which the decree had been dictated drew back from the immediate publication of it. The Pope intimated to the German court and prelates the other acts of the councils, but passed over in silence the great edict for which they had been assembled, and by which they were to be immortalized. It reposed in the Papal Chancery as an authority to be invoked at a more convenient season, and, in the mean time, as a text for the rulers of the earth to ponder, and for the learned to interpret. To Hildebrand it belonged neither to expound nor to threaten, but to act.

The Bishop of Lucca was dead : the Pope nominated his successor. The Bishop of Bamberg was accused of simony : the Pope suspended him. The Archbishop of Bremen still denied the right of Papal legates to preside in a German synod : the Pope deprived him of his see, and of the holy sacraments. The Bishops of Pavia, Turin, and Placentia adhered to Honorius : the Pope deposed them. Henry's five exiled councillors gave no signs of repentance : the Pope again excommunicated them. The Normans invaded the Roman territory : the Pope assailed them by a solemn anathema. Philip of France continued to indulge himself, and to pillage every one else : the Pope upbraided and menaced him. Thus with maledictions, sometimes as deadly as the Pontine miasma, sometimes as innocuous as the Mediterranean breeze, he waged war with his antagonists, and exercised, in reality, the powers which he yet hesitated to assert in words.

To the conqueror of Saxony these encroachments and anathemas of the Pontiff appeared more offensive than formidable. He retaliated rather by scorn than by active hostility. He heaped favours on his own excommunicated councillors—sent one of his chaplains to ascend the vacant episcopal throne of Lucca—nominated an obscure and scandalous member of his own household for the princely mitre of Cologne—and forbade his Saxon subjects to appeal to Rome, even in cases exclusively ecclesiastical. To Henry, the Pontiff seemed an angry, arrogant, vituperative old man, best to be encountered by contempt. To Gregory, the Emperor appeared as the

feeble and unconscious agent in a providential scheme for subjecting the secular to the spiritual dynasty. To such as could read the signs of the times, it was evident that, on either side, this contempt was misplaced ; and that a long and sanguinary conflict drew near, by which the future destinies of the world would be determined.

Events hurried rapidly onward to that crisis. Complaints were preferred to the Holy See of crimes committed by Henry against the Saxon Church which cried for vengeance, and of vices practised by him in private, which rendered him unfit for communion with his fellow-Christians. Gregory cited the Emperor to appear before him to answer these charges. The Emperor, if we may believe the papal historians, answered by an attempt to assassinate the author of so presumptuous a citation.

On Christmas eve, in the year 1075, the city of Rome was visited by a dreadful tempest. Not even the full moon of Italy could penetrate the dense mass of superincumbent clouds. Darkness brooded over the land, and the trembling spectators believed that the day of final judgment was about to dawn. In this war of the elements, however, two processions were seen advancing to the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore. At the head of one was the aged Hildebrand, conducting a few priests to worship at the shrine of the Virgo Deipara. The other was preceded by Cencius, a Roman noble. His followers were armed as for some desperate enterprise. At each pause in the roar of the tempest might be heard the hallelujahs of the worshippers, or the voice of the Pontiff pouring out benedictions on the little flock which knelt before him—when the arm of Cencius grasped his person, and the sword of some yet more daring ruffian inflicted a wound on his forehead. Bound with cords, stripped of his sacred vestments, beaten, and subjected to the basest indignities, the venerable minister of Christ was carried to a fortified mansion within the walls of the city, again to be removed, at daybreak, to exile, or to death. Women were there with women's sympathy and kindly offices, but they were rudely put aside ; and a drawn sword was already aimed at the Pontiff's bosom, when the cries of a fierce multitude, threatening to burn or batter down the house, arrested the arm of the assassin. An arrow, discharged from below, reached and slew him. The walls rocked beneath the strokes of the maddened populace, and Cencius, falling at his prisoner's feet, became himself a suppliant for pardon, and for life.

In profound silence, and undisturbed serenity, Hildebrand had thus far submitted to these atrocious indignities. The occasional raising of his eyes towards heaven alone indicated his consciousness

of them. But to the supplication of his prostrate enemy he returned an instant and a calm assurance of forgiveness. He rescued Cencius from the exasperated besiegers, dismissed him in safety and in peace, and returned, amidst the acclamations of the whole Roman people, to complete the interrupted solemnities of Santa Maria Maggiore.

That Henry instigated this crime, is an accusation of which no proof is extant, and to which all probabilities are opposed. But such a belief was current at the time ; and the contest thenceforward assumed all the bitterness of personal animosity. To the charges of sacrilege, impurity, and assassinations, preferred against the Emperor, his partisans answered by denouncing the Pope himself, at a Synod convened at Worms, as baseborn, and as guilty of murder, simony, necromancy, and devil worship, of habitual, though concealed, profligacy, and of an impious profanation of the Eucharist. Fortunately for the fame of Gregory, his enemies have written a book. Cardinal Benno, one of the most inveterate of them, has bequeathed to us a compendium of all those synodal invectives. The guilt of a base birth is established ; for Hildebrand's father was a carpenter in the little Tuscan town of Saone. The other imputations are refuted by the evident malignity of the writer, and by the utter failure, or the wild extravagance, of his proofs.

Such, however, was not the judgment of the Synod of Worms. A debate, of two days' continuance, closed with an unanimous vote that Gregory the Seventh should be abjured and deposed. Henry first affixed his signature to the act of abjuration. Then each Archbishop, Bishop, and Abbot, rising in his turn, subscribed the same fatal scroll. Scarcely was the assembly dissolved before Imperial messengers were on their way to secure the concurrence of other Churches, and the support of the temporal princes. On every side, but especially in Northern Italy, a fierce and sudden flame attested the long smouldering resentment of the priests whom the Pope had divorced from their wives ; of the lords whose simoniacal traffic he had arrested ; of the princes whose Norman invaders he had cherished ; of the ecclesiastics whom his haughty demeanour had incensed ; of the licentious whom his discipline had revolted ; and of the patriotic whom his ambition had alarmed. The abjuration of Worms was adopted with enthusiasm by another Synod at Placenza. Oaths of awful significance cemented the confederacy. Acts of desperate hostility bore witness to the determination of the confederates to urge the quarrel to extremities. Not a day was to be lost in intimating to Gregory that the apostolic sceptre had fallen from his hands, and that the Christian Church was once more free.

It was now the second week in Lent, in the year 1076. From his throne, beneath the sculptured roof of the Vatican, Gregory, arrayed in the rich mantle, the pall, and the other mystic vestments of pontifical dominion, looked down the far-receding vista of the sacred edifice on the long array of ecclesiastical Lords and Princes, before whom 'Henry King of Germany and Italy, calling himself Emperor,' had been summoned to appear, not as their sovereign to receive their homage, but as a culprit to await their sentence. As he gazed on that new senate, asserting a jurisdiction so majestic—and listened to harmonies which might not unfitly have accompanied the worship of Eden—and joined in anthems which in far distant ages had been sung by blessed saints in their dark crypts, and by triumphant martyrs in their dying agonies—and inhaled the incense symbolical of the prayers offered by the Catholic Church to her eternal Head—what wonder if, under the intoxicating influence of such a scene and of such an hour, the old man believed that he was himself the apostolic Rock on which her foundations were laid, and that his cause and person were sacred as the will, and invincible as the power, of heaven itself! The 'Veni Creator' was on the lips of the papal choir, when Roland, an envoy from the Synods of Worms and Placenza, presented himself before the assembled hierarchy of Rome. His demeanour was fierce, and his speech abrupt. 'The King and the united Bishops, both of Germany and Italy' (such was his apostrophe to the Pope), 'transmit to thee this command:—Descend without delay from the throne of St Peter. Abandon the usurped government of the Roman Church. To such honours none must aspire without the general choice, and the sanction of the Emperor.' Then addressing the conclave—'To you, brethren,' he said, 'it is commanded, that at the feast of Pentecost ye present yourselves before the King my master, to receive a pope and father from his hands. This pretended pastor is a ravenous wolf.' A brief pause of mute astonishment gave way to shouts of fury. Swords were drawn, and the audacious herald was about to expiate his temerity with his blood. But Gregory descended from his throne, received from the hands of Roland the letters of the Synods, and, resuming his seat, read them, in a clear and deliberate voice, to the indignant council. Again the sacred edifice rang with a tempest of passionate invective. Again swords were drawn on Roland, and again the storm was composed by the voice of the Pontiff. He spake of prophecies fulfilled in the contumacy of the King, and in the troubles of the faithful. He assured them, that victory would reward their zeal, or divine consolations soothe their defeat; but whether victory or defeat should be their doom, the time, he said, had come when the aveng-

ing sword must be drawn to smite the enemy of God, and of His Church.

The speaker ceased and turned for approbation, or at least for acquiescence, not to the enthusiastic throng of mitred or of armed adherents, but to one who, even in that eventful moment, divided with himself the gaze and the sympathy of that illustrious assemblage. For by his side, though in an inferior station, sat Agnes, the Empress-mother, brought there to witness and to ratify the judgment to be pronounced on her only child, whom she had borne amidst the proudest hopes, and trained for empire beneath the griefs and anxieties of widowhood. She bore, or strove to bear, herself as a daughter of the Church, but could not forget that she was the mother of Henry, when, in all the impersonated majesty of that holy fellowship, Hildebrand, raising his eyes to heaven, with a voice echoing, amidst the breathless silence of the Synod, through the remotest arches of the lofty pile, invoked the holy Peter, prince of the apostles, to hear, and ‘Mary the mother of God,’ and the blessed Paul, and all the saints, to bear witness, while for the honour and defence of Christ’s Church, in the name of the sacred Trinity, and by the power and authority of Peter, he interdicted to King Henry, son of Henry the Emperor, the government of the whole realm of Germany and Italy, absolved all Christians from their oaths and allegiance to him, and bound him with the bond of anathema, ‘that the nations may know and acknowledge that thou art Peter, and that, upon thy rock, the Son of the living God hath built His church, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’

When intelligence of the deposition of Henry first astounded the nations of Europe, the glories of Papal Rome seemed to the multitude to have been madly staked on one most precarious issue. Men foretold that the Emperor would promptly and signally punish a treason so audacious, and that the Holy See would, ere long, descend to the level of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Nor did the wisest deem such anticipations unreasonable. They reflected that Henry was still in the very prime of life—that he possessed a force of will which habitual luxury had not impaired, and a throne, in the hearts of his people, which the wildest excess of vice and folly had not subverted—that he reigned over the fairest and the wealthiest portion of the Continent—that he commanded numerous vassals, and could bring into the field powerful armies—that he had crushed rebellion among his subjects, and had no rival to dread among his neighbours—and that the Papacy had flourished under the shelter of the Imperial crown, the authority of which had been so arrogantly defied, and the fierce resentment of which was now inevitably to be

encountered. But in the seeming strength of the Imperial resources, there was an inherent weakness; and in the seeming weakness of the Papal cause, a latent but invincible strength. Even Teutonic loyalty had been undermined by the cruelties, the faithlessness, and the tyranny of the monarch, and the doom of the oppressor was upon him. The cause of Gregory was, on the other hand, in popular estimation, the cause of sanctity and of truth, of primæval discipline and traditionary reverence, and the Pope himself a martyr, who, in all the majesty of superhuman power, was resolved either to repel the spoiler from the Christian fold, or to lay down his life for the sheep. That these high and lofty purposes really animated the soul, or kindled the imagination, of him to whom they were thus ascribed, it would be presumptuous to deny. But whatever may have been his reliance on the promises of heaven, he certainly combined with it a penetrating insight into the policy of earth. He summoned to his aid his Norman feudatories, and invoked the succour of his Tuscan allies. She who now reigned in Tuscany might be supposed to have been called into being for the single purpose of sustaining, like another Deborah or Judith, the fainting hopes of another Israel.

On the death of Boniface, Duke and Marquis of Tuscany, in 1054, his states descended to his only surviving child, who, under the title of 'The Great Countess,' ruled there until her own death in 1116, first in tutelage, then in conjunction with her mother, Beatrice, and during the last thirty-nine years of that long period, in her own plenary and undivided right. Though she married Godfrey of Lorraine in her youth, and Guelph of Bavaria in her more mature age, neither the wit and military genius of her first husband, nor the wisdom and dignity of his successor, could win the heart of Matilda. Her biographer has entered into an elaborate inquiry to establish the fact, that, notwithstanding her nuptial vows with two of the most accomplished princes of that age, she lived and died as in a state of celibacy. Even they who cannot concur with him in pronouncing the sacrifice sublime, will admit that it was at least opportune. While persuading the clergy to put away their wives, she herself repudiated both her husbands. The story, indeed is not very tractable. Schools for scandal preceded, as they have survived, all the other schools of modern Italy; and whoever has read Goldasti's 'Replication for the Sacred Cæsarean and Royal Majesty of the Franks,' is aware that if Florence had then possessed a comic stage and an Aristophanes, he would have exhibited no less a personage than the great Hildebrand in the chains of no meaner an Aspasia than the great Countess of Tuscany. But large as is the space occupied by this charge, and by the refutation of it, in the annals of

those times, it may safely be rejected as altogether incredible and absurd. At that period, the anatomists of the human heart seemed not to have described, if indeed they had detected, that hieropathic affection so familiarly known among ourselves, of which the female spirit is the seat, and the ministers of religion the objects—a flame usually as pure as it is intense, and which burned as brightly in the soul of Matilda eight centuries ago, as in the most ardent of the fair bosoms which it warms and animates now. She was in truth in love, but in love with the Papacy. Six aged Popes successively acknowledged and rejoiced over her, as at once the most zealous adherent of their cause, and the most devoted worshipper of their persons. And well might those holy fathers exult in such a conquest. Poets, in their dreams, have scarcely imaged, heroes, in the hour of their triumph, have rarely attained, so illustrious a trophy of their genius or of their valour.

The life of Matilda is told by Donnizone, a member of her household, in three books of lamentable hexameters ; and by Fiorentini, an antiquary and genealogist of Lucca in the seventeenth century, in three other books scarcely less wearisome ; though his learning, his love of truth, and his zeal for the glory of his heroine, secure for him the respect and the sympathy of his readers. That she should have inspired no nobler eulogies than theirs, may be ascribed partly to her having lived in the times when the Boethian had subsided into the Bœotian age of Italian literature, and partly to the uninviting nature of the ecclesiastical feuds and alliances in which her days were consumed. Otherwise, neither Zenobia, nor Isabella, nor Elizabeth, had a fairer claim to inspire, and to live in immortal verse. Not even her somnolent chaplain, as he beat out his Latin doggerel, could avoid giving utterance to the delight with which her delicate features, beaming with habitual gaiety, had inspired him. Not even her severe confessor, Saint Anselm of Lucca, could record without astonishment, how her feeble frame sustained all the burdens of civil government, and all the fatigues of actual war ; burdens indeed, which, but for a series of miraculous cures wrought for her at his own intercession, she could not (he assures us) have sustained at all.

Supported either by miracle, or by her own indomitable spirit, Matilda wielded the sword of justice with masculine energy both in the field, against the enemies of the Holy See, and in the tribunal, against such as presumed to violate her laws. He who knew her best, regarded these stern exercises of her authority but as the promptings of a heart which loved too wisely and too well to love with fondness. In the camp, such was the serenity of her demeanour, and the graceful flow of her discourse, that she appeared to him

a messenger of mercy, in the garb of a Penthesilea. On the judgment-seat he saw in her not the stern avenger of crime, but rather the compassionate mother of the feeble and the oppressed.

Nor did she allow to herself any of the weak indulgence she denied to others. In a voluptuous age she lived austere, subduing her appetites, and torturing her natural affections with the perverse ingenuity which her ghostly counsellors inculcated and extolled. In a superstitious age she subdued her desire for the devotional abstractions of the cloister; and with greater wisdom, and more real piety, consecrated herself to the active duties of her princely office. In an illiterate age, her habits of study were such that she could make herself intelligible to all the troops among whom she lived, though levied from almost every part of Europe, and especially to her Italian, French, and German soldiers, whose tongues she used with equal facility. Donnizone assures us, that, though he was ever at hand as her Latin secretary, she wrote with her own pen all her letters in that language to the Pontiffs and Sovereigns of her times—a proof, as his readers will think, of her discernment no less than of her learning. On his testimony, also, may be claimed for her the praise of loving, collecting, and preserving books; for thus he sings:—

‘Copia librorum non deficit huic, ve bonorum;
Libros ex cunctis habet artibus atque figuris.’

How well she understood the right use of them, may be inferred from her employment of Werner, a jurist, to revise the ‘*Corpus Juris Civilis* ;’ and of Anselm, her confessor, to compile a collection of the Canon Law, and to write a commentary on the Psalms of David. Such, indeed, was her proficiency in scriptural knowledge, that her versifying chaplain maintains her equality in such studies with the most learned of the Bishops, her contemporaries.

Warrior, ascetic, and scholar as she was, the spirit of Matilda was too generous to be imprisoned within the limits of the camp, the cell, or the library. It was her noble ambition to be the refuge of the oppressed, the benefactor of the miserable, and the champion of what she deemed the truth. Mortifying the love of this world’s glory, she laboured, with a happy inconsistency, to render it still more glorious. At her bidding, castles and palaces, convents and cathedrals, statues and public monuments, arose throughout Tuscany. Yet, so well was her munificence sustained by a wise economy, that to the close of her long reign, she was still able to maintain her hereditary title to the appellation of ‘the rich,’ by which her father, Boniface, had been also distinguished. She might, with no less pro-

priety, have been designated as 'the powerful;' since, either by direct authority, or by irresistible influence, she ruled nearly the whole of Northern Italy, from Lombardy to the Papal States, and received from the other monarchs of the West, both the outward homage, and the real deference, reserved for sovereign potentates.

Matilda attained to the plenary dominion over her hereditary states at the very crisis of the great controversy of her age, when Henry had procured, and promulgated, the sentence of the Synod of Worms for the deposition of Gregory. Heedless, or rather unconscious, of the resources of that formidable adversary, he had made no preparation for the inevitable contest; but as though smitten by a judicial blindness, selected that critical moment for a new outrage on the most sacred feelings of his own subjects. He marched into Saxony; and there, as if in scorn of the free German spirit, erected a stern military despotism, confiscated the estates of the people, exiled their nobles, imprisoned their bishops, sold the peasants as slaves, or compelled them to labour in erecting fortresses, from which his mercenary troops might curb and ravage the surrounding country. The cry of the oppressed rose on every side from the unhappy land. It entered into the ears of the Avenger.

As Henry returned from this disastrous triumph to Utrecht, the Imperial banner floated over a vast assemblage of courtiers, churchmen, vassals, ministers of justice, men-at-arms, and sutlers, who lay encamped like some nomad tribe round their chief; when the indignant bearing of some of his followers, and the alarmed and half-averted gaze of others, disclosed to him the awful fact that a pontifical anathema had cast him down from his Imperial state, and exiled him from the society of all Christian people. His heart fainted within him at these dismal tidings as at the sound of his own passing bell. But that heart was kingly still, and resolute either to dare or to endure, in defence of his hereditary crown. Shame and sorrow might track him to the grave, but he would hold no counsel with despair. The world had rejected him—the Church had cast him out—his very mother had deserted him. In popular belief, perhaps in his own, God Himself had abandoned him. Yet all was not lost. He retained, at least, the hope of vengeance. On his hated adversary he might yet retaliate blow for blow, and malediction for malediction.

On Easter-day, in the year 1076, surrounded by a small and anxious circle of prelates, William the Archbishop of Utrecht ascended his archiepiscopal throne, and recited the sacred narrative which commemorates the rising of the Redeemer from the grave. But no strain of exulting gratitude followed. A fierce invective

depicted, in the darkest colours, the character and the career of Hildebrand, and with bitter scorn the Preacher denied the right of such a Pope to censure the Emperor of the West, to govern the Church, or to live in her communion. In the name of the assembled Synod, he then pronounced him excommunicate.

At that moment the summons of death reached the author of this daring defiance. While the last fatal struggle convulsed his body, a yet sorer agony affected his soul. He died self-aborred, rejecting the sympathy, the prayers, and the sacraments with which the terrified bystanders would have soothed his departing spirit. The voice of heaven itself seemed to rise in wild concert with the cry of his tortured conscience. Thunderbolts struck down both the church in which he had abjured the Vicar of Christ, and the adjacent palace in which the Emperor was residing. Three other of the anti-papal prelates quickly followed William to the grave by strange and violent deaths. Godfrey of Lorraine fell by the hand of an assassin. These facts, though recorded by the contemporary chroniclers, will of course be received in our own times with the judicious scepticism which has been so deeply impressed on all modern readers of historical marvels. But there can be no doubt that the belief in these accumulated portents was everywhere diffused, and awakened universal horror. Each day announced to Henry some new succession. His guards deserted his standard; his personal attendants avoided his presence. The members of the Synod of Worms fled to Rome, to make their peace with the justly irritated Pontiff. The nobles set free the Saxon prisoners who had been confided to their custody. Otho appeared once more in arms to lead a new insurrection of his fellow-countrymen. The great Princes of Germany convened a council to deliberate on the deposition of their Sovereign. To every eye but his own, all seemed to be lost. Even to him it was but too evident that the loyalty of his subjects had been undermined, and that his throne was tottering beneath him. A single resource remained. He might yet assemble the faithful, or the desperate, adherents of his cause—inspire dread into those whose allegiance he had forfeited—make one last strenuous effort in defence of his crown—and descend to the tomb, if so it must be, the anointed chief of the Carolingian Empire.

With a mind wrought up to such resolves, he traversed the north of Germany to encounter the Saxon insurgents—published to the world the sentence of Utrecht—and called on the Lombard Bishops to concur in the excommunication it denounced. He reaped the usual reward of audacity. Though repelled by Otho, and compelled to retrace his march to the Rhine, he found every city, vil

lage, and convent, by which he passed, distracted with the controversy between the Diadem and the Tiara. Religion and awakening loyalty divided the Empire. Though not yet combining into any definite form, the elements of a new confederacy were evidently at work in favour of a Monarch who thus knew how to draw courage and energy from despair.

Yet the moral sentiment of the German people was as yet unequivocally against their Sovereign. The Imperialists mournfully acknowledged that their chief was justly condemned. The Papalists indignantly denied the truth of the reproaches cast on their leader. In support of that denial, Gregory defended himself in epistles addressed to all the greater Teutonic prelates. Among them is a letter to Herman, Bishop of Mentz, which vividly exhibits both the strength of the writer's character and the weakness of his cause. Although (he says) such as, from their exceeding folly, deny the papal right of excommunicating kings, hardly deserve an answer (the right to *depose* kings was the real point in debate), yet, in condescension to their weakness, he will dispel their doubts. Peter himself had taught this doctrine, as appeared by a letter from St Clement (in the authenticity of which no one believes). When Pepin coveted the crown of Childeric, Pope Zachary was invited, by the Mayor of the Palace, to give judgment between them. On his ambiguous award the usurper had founded the title of his dynasty. Saint Gregory the Great had *threatened* to depose *any* monarch who should resist his decrees. The story of Ambrose and Theodosius, rightly interpreted, gave proof that the Emperor held his crown at the will of the Apostle. Every king was one of the "sheep" whom Peter had been commanded to feed, and one of the "things" which Peter had been empowered to bind. Who could presume to place the Sceptre on a level with the Crosier, the one the conquest of human pride, the other the gift of divine mercy: the one conducting to the vain glories of earth, the other pointing the way to Heaven? As gold surpasses lead, so does the Episcopal transcend the Imperial dignity. Could Henry justly refuse to the universal Bishop that precedence which Constantine had yielded to the meanest Prelate at Nicæa? Must ~~not~~ he be supreme above all terrestrial thrones, to whom all ecclesiastical dominations are subordinate?

To employ good arguments, one must be in the right. To make the best possible use of such as are to be had is the privilege of genius, even when in the wrong. Nothing could be more convincing to the spiritual lords of Germany, nothing more welcome to her secular chiefs, than this array of great names and sonorous authorities against their falling Sovereign. To overcome the obstinate

loyalty of the burghers and peasantry to their young and gallant King, religious terrors were indispensable ; and continual reinforcements of pontifical denunciations were therefore solicited and obtained. At length, in the autumn of 1076, appeared from Rome a rescript which, in the event (no longer doubtful) of Henry's continued resistance to the sentence of the last papal council, required the German princes and prelates, counts and barons, to elect a new Emperor, and assured them of the Apostolical confirmation of any choice which should be worthily made. These were no idle words. The death-struggle could no longer be postponed. Legates arrived from Rome to guide the proceedings of the Diet to be convened for this momentous deliberation. It met during the autumn at Tribur.

The annals of mankind scarcely record so solemn, or so dispassionate, an act of national justice. Some princely banner waved over every adjacent height, and groups of unarmed soldiers might be traced along the furthest windings of the neighbouring Rhine, joining in the pleasant toils, and swelling the gay carols, of the mature vintage. In the centre, and under the defence, of that vast encampment, rose a pavilion, within which were collected all whose dignity entitled them to a voice in that high debate. From the only extant record of what occurred, and of what was spoken there, it may be inferred that Henry's offences against the Church were regarded lightly in comparison with the criminality of his civil government. Stationed on the opposite bank of the river, he received quick intelligence of the progress and tendency of the discussion. The prospect darkened hourly. Soldiers had already been despatched to secure him ; and his person was in danger of unknighly indignities ; which might for ever have estranged the reverence borne to him by the ruder multitude, when he attempted to avert the impending sentence of deposition by an offer to abdicate all the powers of government to his greater feudatories, stipulating for himself only that he should retain his Imperial title as the nominal head of the Teutonic Empire.

Palpable as was the snare to the subtle Italian legates, the simple-minded Germans appear to have nearly fallen into it. For seven successive days speech answered speech on this proposal, and when men could neither speak nor listen more, the project of a nominal reign, shorn of all substantial authority, was adopted by the Diet ; but (in modern phrase) with amendments obviously imposed by the representatives of the sacerdotal power. The Pope was to be invited to hold a Diet at Augsburg in the ensuing spring. He was meanwhile to decide whether Henry should be restored to the bosom of

the Church. If so restored, he was at once to resume all his imperial rights. But if the sun should go down on him, still an excommunicate person, on the 23rd of February, 1077, his crown was to be transferred to another. Till then he was to dwell at Spires, with the title of Emperor, but without a court, an army, or a place of public worship.

The theocratic theory, hitherto regarded as a mere Utopian extravagance, had thus passed into a practical and sacred reality. The fisherman of Galilee had triumphed over the conqueror of Pharsalia. The vassal of Otho had reduced Otho's successor to vassalage. The universal monarchy which Heathen Rome had wrung from a bleeding world, had been extorted by Christian Rome from the superstition or the reverence of mankind. The relation of the Papacy and the Empire had been inverted ; and Churchmen foretold with unhesitating confidence the exaltation of their order above all earthly potentates, and the resort to their capital of countless worshippers, there to do homage to an oracle more profound than that of Delphi, to mysteries more pure than those of Eleusis, and to a pontificate more august than that of Jerusalem. Strains of unbounded joy resounded through the papal city. Solitude and shame and penitential exercises attested the past crimes, and the abject fortunes, of the exile of Spires.

But against this regimen of sackcloth and fasting, the body and the soul of Henry revolted. At the close of the Diet of Tribur, he had scarcely completed his twenty-sixth year. Degraded, if not finally deposed, hated and reviled, abandoned by man, and compelled by conscience to anticipate his abandonment by God, he yet, in the depths of his misery, retained the remembrance and the hope of dominion. The future was still bright with the anticipations of youth. He might yet retrieve his reputation, resume the blessings he had squandered, and take a signal vengeance on his great antagonist. And amidst the otherwise universal desertion, there remained one faithful bosom on which to repose his own aching heart. Bertha, his wife, who had retained her purity unsullied amidst the license of his court, now retained her fidelity unshaken amidst the falsehood of his adherents. Her wrongs had been such as to render a deep resentment nothing less than a duty. Her happiness and her honour had been basely assailed by the selfish profligate to whom the most solemn vows had in vain united her. But to her, those vows were a bond stronger than death, and indissoluble by all the confederate powers of earth and hell. To suffer was the condition—to pardon and to love, the necessity—of her existence. Vice and folly could not have altogether depraved him who was the object of such

inalienable tenderness, and who at length learnt to return it with a devotion almost equal to her own, after a bitter experience had taught him the real value of the homage and caresses of the world.

In her society, though an exile from every other, Henry wore away two months at Spire in a fruitless solicitation to the Pope to receive him in Italy as a penitent suitor for reconciliation with the Church. December had now arrived; and in less than ten weeks would be fulfilled the term, when, if still excommunicate, he must, according to the sentence of Tribur, finally resign, not the prerogatives alone, but with them the title and rank of Head of the Empire. No sacrifices seemed too great to avert this danger; and history tells of none more singular than those to which the heir of the Franconian dynasty was constrained to submit. In the garb of a pilgrim, and in a season so severe as, during more than four months, to have converted the Rhine into a solid mass of ice, Henry and his faithful Bertha, carrying in her arms their infant child, undertook to cross the Alps, with no escort but such menial servants as it was yet in his power to hire for that desperate enterprise. Among the courtiers who had so lately thronged his palace, not one would become the companion of his toil and dangers. Among the neighbouring princes who had so lately solicited his alliance, not one would grant him the poor boon of a safe-conduct and a free passage through their states. Even his wife's mother exacted from him large territorial cessions as the price of allowing him, and her own daughter, to scale one of the Alpine passes, apparently that of the Great St Bernard. Day by day, peasants cut out an upward path through the long windings of the mountain. In the descent from the highest summit, when thus at length gained, Henry had to encounter fatigues and dangers from which the chamois-hunter would have turned aside. Vast trackless wastes of snow were traversed, sometimes by mere crawling, at other times by the aid of rope-ladders or still ruder contrivances, and not seldom by a sheer plunge along the inclined steep; the Empress and her child being enveloped, on those occasions, in the raw skins of beasts slaughtered on the march.

The transition from these dangers to security, from the pine forests, glaciers, and precipices of the Alps, to the sunny plains of Italy, was not so grateful to the wearied travellers as the change from the gloom of Spire to the rapturous greetings which hailed their advance along the course of the Po. A splendid court, a numerous army, and an exulting populace, once more attested the majesty of the Emperor; nor was the welcome of his Italian subjects destitute of a deeper significance than usually belongs to the pæans of the worshippers of kings. They dreamed of the haughty Pontiff humbled, of the see

of Ambrose exalted to civil and ecclesiastical supremacy, and of the German yoke lifted from their necks. Doomed as were these soaring hopes to an early disappointment, the enthusiasm of Henry's partisans justified those more sober expectations which had prompted his perilous journey across the Alps. He could now prosecute his suit to the Pope with the countenance and in the vicinity of those zealous adherents, and at a secure distance from the enemies towards whom Hildebrand was already advancing to hold the contemplated Diet of Augsburg. In the personal command of a military escort, Matilda attended the Papal progress ; and was even pointing out to her guards their line of march through the snowy peaks which closed in her northern horizon, when tidings of the rapid approach of the Emperor at the head of a formidable force induced her to retreat to the fortress of Canossa. There, in the bosom of the Apennines, her sacred charge would be secure from any sudden assault ; nor had she anything to dread from the regular leaguer of such powers as could, in that age, have been brought to the siege of it.

Canossa was the cradle and the original seat of her ancient race. It was also the favourite residence of the Great Countess ; and when Gregory found shelter within her walls, they were crowded with guests of the highest eminence in social and in literary rank. So imposing was the scene, and so superb the assemblage, that the drowsy muse of her versifying chaplain awakened for once to an hyperbole, and declared Canossa to be nothing less than a new Rome, the rival of that of Romulus. Thither, as if to verify the boast, came a long line of mitred penitents from Germany, whom the severe Hildebrand consigned on their arrival to solitary cells with bread and water for their fare ; and there also appeared the German Emperor himself, not the leader of the rumoured host of Lombard invaders, but surrounded by a small and unarmed retinue—mean in his apparel, and contrite in outward aspect, a humble suppliant for pardon and acceptance to the communion of the faithful. Long centuries had passed away since the sceptre of the West had been won by Italian armies in Italian fields, and Henry declined to put the issue of this great contest on the swords of his Milanese vassals. He well knew that, to break the alliance of patriotism, cupidity, and superstition, which had degraded him at Tribur, it was necessary to rescue himself from the anathema which he had but too justly incurred, and that his crown must be redeemed, not by force, but by submission to his formidable antagonist. And Hildebrand ! fathomless as are the depths of the human heart, who can doubt that, amidst the conflict of emotions which now agitated him, the most

dominant was the exulting sense of victory over the earth's greatest monarch. His rival at his feet, his calumniator self-condemned, the lips which had rudely summoned him to abdicate the Apostolic crown now suing to him for the recovery of the Imperial diadem, the exaltation in his person of decrepit age over fiery youth, of mental over physical power, of the long-enthralled Church over the long-tyrannizing world, all combined to form a triumph too intoxicating even for that capacious intellect.

The veriest sycophant of the Papal Court, even in that superstitious age, would scarcely have ventured to describe, as a serious act of sacramental devotion, the religious masquerade which followed between the high priest and the imperial penitent; or to extol as politic and wise, the base indignities to which the Pontiff subjected his prostrate enemy, and of which his own pastoral letters contained the otherwise incredible record. Had it been his object to compel Henry to drain to its bitterest dregs the cup of unprofitable humiliation—to exasperate to madness the Emperor himself, and all who would resent as a personal wrong an insult to the sovereign—and to transmit to the latest age a monument and a hatred alike imperishable, of the extravagances of spiritual despotism,—he could have devised no fitter course.

Environed by many of the greatest Princes of Italy who owed fealty and allegiance to the Emperor, Gregory affected to turn a deaf ear to his solicitations. His humblest offers were spurned; his most unbounded acknowledgments of the sacerdotal authority over the kings and kingdoms of the world were rejected. For the distress of her royal kinsman, Matilda felt as women and as monarchs feel; but even her entreaties seemed to be fruitless. Day by day, the same cold stern appeal to the future decisions of the Diet to be convened at Augsburg, repelled the suit even of that powerful intercessor. The critical point, at which prayers for reconciliation would give way to indignation and defiance, had been almost reached. Then, and not till then, the Pope condescended to offer his ghostly pardon, on the condition that Henry would surrender into his hands the custody of the crown, the sceptre, and the other ensigns of royalty, and acknowledge himself unworthy to bear the royal title. This, however, was a scandal on which not even the proud spirit of the now triumphant priest dared to insist, and to which not even the now abject heart of the Emperor could be induced to submit. But the shame which was spared to the Sovereign, was inflicted with relentless severity on the Man.

It was towards the end of January. The earth was covered with

snow, and the mountain-streams were arrested by the keen frost of the Apennines, when, clad in a thin penitential garment of white linen, and bare of foot, Henry, the descendant of so many kings, and the ruler of so many nations, ascended slowly and alone the rocky path which led to the outer gate of the fortress of Canossa. With strange emotions of pity, of wonder, and of scorn, the assembled crowd gazed on his majestic form and noble features, as, passing through the first and the second gateway, he stood in the posture of humiliation before the third, which remained inexorably closed against his further progress. The rising sun found him there fasting; and there the setting sun left him stiff with cold, faint with hunger, and devoured by shame and ill-suppressed resentment. A second day dawned, and wore tardily away, and closed, in a continuance of the same indignities, poured out on Europe at large in the person of her chief, by the Vicar of the meek, the lowly, and the compassionate Redeemer. A third day came, and, still irreverently trampling on the hereditary lord of the fairer half of the civilized world, Hildebrand once more compelled him to prolong till nightfall this profane and hollow parody on the real workings of the broken and contrite heart.

Nor was he unwarned of the activity and the strength of the indignation aroused by this protracted outrage on every natural sentiment, and every honest prejudice, of mankind. Lamentations and reproaches rang through the castle of Canossa. Murmurs from Henry's inveterate enemies, and his own zealous adherents, upbraided Gregory as exhibiting rather the cruelty of a tyrant than the rigour of an apostle. But the endurance of the sufferer was the only measure of the inflexibility of the tormentor; nor was it till the unhappy monarch had burst away from the scene of his mental and bodily anguish, and sought shelter in a neighbouring convent, that the Pope, yielding at length to the instances of Matilda, would admit the degraded suppliant into his presence. It was the fourth day on which he had borne the humiliating garb of an affected penitent, and, in that sordid raiment he drew near on his bare feet to the more than imperial Majesty of the Church, and prostrated himself, in more than servile deference, before the diminutive and emaciated old man, "from the terrible glance of whose countenance," we are told, "the eye of every beholder recoiled as from the lightning." Hunger, cold, nakedness, and shame had, for the moment, crushed the gallant spirit of the sufferer. He wept and cried for mercy, again and again renewing his entreaties, until he had reached the lowest level of abasement to which his own enfeebled heart, or the haughtiness of his great antagonist, could depress him. Then, and

not till then, did the Pope condescend to revoke the anathema of the Vatican.

Cruel, however, were the tender mercies of the now exulting Pontiff. He restored his fallen enemy at once to the communion, and to the contempt, of his Christian brethren. The price of pardon was a promise to submit himself to the future judgment of the Apostolic See ; to resign his crown if that judgment should be unfavourable to him ; to abstain meanwhile from the enjoyment of any of his royal prerogatives or revenues ; to acknowledge that his subjects had been lawfully released from their allegiance ; to banish his former friends and advisers ; to govern his states, should he regain them, in obedience to the papal counsels ; to enforce all papal decrees ; and never to revenge his present humiliation. To the observance of the terms thus dictated by the conqueror, the oaths of Henry himself, and of several Prelates and Princes as his sponsors, were pledged ; and then, in the name of Him who had declared that His kingdom was not of this world, and as the successor of Him who had forbidden to all Bishops any lordship over the heritage of Christ, the solemn words of pontifical absolution rescued the degraded Emperor from the forfeit to which he had been conditionally sentenced by the confederates at Tribur.

Another expiation was yet to be made to the injured majesty of the Tiara. He in whom the dynasties of Cæsar, of Charlemagne, and of Otho had their representative, might still be compelled to endure one last and galling contumely. Holding in his hand the seeming bread, which (as he believed) words of far more than miraculous power had just transmuted into the very body which died and was entombed at Calvary—"Behold !" exclaimed the Pontiff, fixing his keen and flashing eye on the jaèd countenance of the unhappy Monarch, "behold the body of the Lord ! Be it this day the witness of my innocence. May the Almighty God now free me from the suspicion of the guilt of which I have been accused by thee and thine, if I be really innocent ! May He this very day smite me with a sudden death, if I be really guilty !" Amidst the acclamations of the bystanders, he then looked up to heaven, and broke and ate the consecrated element. "And now," he exclaimed, turning once more on the awe-stricken Henry that eye which neither age could dim nor pity soften ; "if thou art conscious of thine innocence, and assured that the charges brought against thee by thine own opponents are false and calumnious, free the Church of God from scandal, and thyself from suspicion, and take as an appeal to heaven this body of the Lord."

That, in open contradiction to his own recent prayers and penances,

the penitent should have accepted this insulting challenge, was obviously impossible. He trembled, and evaded it. At length, when his wounded spirit, and half-lifeless frame, could endure no more, a banquet was served, where, suppressing the agonies of shame and rage with which his bosom was to heave from that moment to his last, he closed this scene of wretchedness, by accepting the hospitalities, sharing in the familiar discourse, and submitting to the benedictions, of the man who had in his person given proofs, till then unimagined, of the depths of ignominy to which the Temporal chief of Christendom might be depressed by an audacious use of the powers of her Ecclesiastical head.

The Lombard lords who had hailed the arrival of their Sovereign in Italy, had gradually overtaken his rapid advance to Canossa. There, marshalled in the adjacent valleys, they anxiously awaited, from day to day, intelligence of what might be passing within the fortress, when at length the gates were thrown open, and, attended only by the usual episcopal retinue, a bishop was seen to descend from the steep path which led to their encampment. He announced that Henry had submitted himself to the present discipline and to the future guidance of the Pope, and had received his ghostly absolution ; and that on the same terms his Holiness was ready to bestow the same grace on his less guilty followers. As the tidings of this papal victory flew from rank to rank, the mountains echoed with one protracted shout of indignation and defiance. The Lombards spurned the pardon of Hildebrand—an usurper of the Apostolic throne, himself excommunicated by the decrees of German and Italian Synods. They denied the authority of the Emperor, debased as he now was by concessions unworthy of a king, and by indignities disgraceful to a soldier. They vowed to take the crown from his dishonoured head, to place it on the brows of his son, the yet infant, Conrad ; to march immediately to Rome, and there to depose the proud Churchman who had thus dared to humble to the dust the majesty of the Franconian line, and of the Lombard name.

In the midst of this military tumult, the gates of Canossa were again thrown open, and Henry himself was seen descending to the camp, his noble figure bowed down, and his lordly countenance overcast with unwonted emotions. As he passed along the Lombard lines, every eye expressed contempt, and derision was on every tongue. But the Italian was not the German spirit. They could at once despise and obey. Following the standard of their degraded monarch, they conducted him to Reggio, where, in a conclave of ecclesiastics, he instantly proceeded to concert schemes for their deliverance, and for his own revenge.

Within a single week from the absolution of Canossa, Gregory was on his way to Mantua to hold a council, to which the Emperor had invited him, with the treacherous design (if the papal historians may be credited) of seizing and imprisoning him there. The vigilance of Matilda rescued her Holy Father from the real or imaginary danger. From the banks of the Po she conducted him back, under the escort of her troops, to the shelter of her native mountain-fastness. His faith in his own infallibility must have undergone a severe trial. The Imperial sinner he had pardoned was giving daily proof that the heart of man is not to be penetrated even by Papal eyes. Henry was exercising, with ostentation, the prerogatives he had so lately vowed to forego. He had cast off the abject tone of the confessional. All his royal instincts were in full activity. He breathed defiance against the Pontiff—seized and imprisoned his legates—recalled to his presence his excommunicated councillors—became once more strenuous for his rights—and was recompensed by one simultaneous burst of sympathy, enthusiasm, and devotedness, from his Italian subjects.

To balance the ominous power thus rising against him, Gregory now received an accession of dignity and of influence on which his eulogists are unwilling to dwell. The discipline of the Church, and the fate of the Empire, were not the only subjects of his solicitude while sheltered in the castle and city of the Tuscan heroine. The world was startled and scandalised by the intelligence, that his princely hostess had granted all her hereditary states to her Apostolic guest, and to his successors for ever, in full allodial dominion. By some sage of the law, who drew up the act of cession, it is ascribed to her dread of the Emperor's hostility. A nobler impulse is ascribed to the mistress of Liguria and Tuscany, in the hobbling verses of her more honest chaplain. Peter, he says, bore the keys of heaven, and Matilda had resolved to bear the Etrurian keys of Peter's patrimony, in no other character than that of doorkeeper to Peter. With what benignity the splendid inheritance was accepted, may also be learned from the worthy versifier. At this hour Pope Gregory the Sixteenth holds some parts of his territorial dominion in virtue of this grant. Hildebrand is one of the saints of the Church, and one of the heroes of the world. He, therefore, escapes the reproach of so grave an abuse of the hospitality of the Great Countess, and of the confidence she reposed in her spiritual guide. The coarser reproach in which it has involved them both will be adopted by no one who has ever watched the weaving of the mystic bonds which knit together the female and the sacerdotal hearts. It was the age of feudalism, not of chivalry. Yet when chivalry came, and St

Louis himself adorned it, would he, if so tried, have resisted the temptation under which St Gregory fell? It is, probably, well for the fame of that illustrious prince that his virtue was never subjected to so severe a test.

Canossa, the scene of this memorable cession, was, at the same time, the prison of him to whom it was made. All the passes were beset with Henry's troops. All the Lombard and Tuscan cities were in Henry's possession. His reviving courage had kindled the zeal of his adherents. He was no longer an outcast to be trampled down with impunity; but the leader of a formidable host, with whom even the Vicar of Christ must condescend to temporise.

In the wild defiles of the Alps, swift messengers from the Princes to the Pope hurried past solemn legates from the Pope to the Princes—they urging his instant appearance at Augsburg—he exhorting them to avoid any decision in his absence. Mitred emissaries also passed from Gregory to the Emperor, summoning him to attend the Diet within a time by which no one unwafted by wings or steam could have reached the place, and requesting from him a suicidal safe-conduct for his pontifical judge. The Pope was now confined to the weapons with which men of the gown contend with men of the sword. His prescience foreboded a civil war. His policy was to assume the guidance of the German league just far enough to maintain his lofty claims, not far enough to be irrevocably committed to the leaguers. A plausible apology for his absence was necessary. It was afforded by Henry's rejection of demands which were made only that they might be rejected.

To Otho and to the aspiring Rudolf such subtleties were alike unfamiliar and unsuspected. Those stout soldiers and simple Germans knew that the Pope had deposed their King, and had absolved them from their allegiance. They doubted not, therefore, that he was bound heart and soul to their cause. Or if, in the assembly which they held at Forchheim, a doubt was whispered of Italian honour or of Pontifical faith, it was silenced by the presence there of Papal legates, who sedulously swelled the tide of invective against Henry. At first, indeed, they dissuaded the immediate choice of a rival sovereign. But to the demand of the Princes for prompt and decisive measures, they gave their ready assent. They advised them, it is true, to confer no hereditary title on the object of their choice. Yet when, in defiance of that advice, the choice was made, they solemnly confirmed it in the name, and by the authority, of Gregory. They did not, certainly, vote for the election of Rudolf; but, when the shouts of the multitude announced his accession to the Teutonic throne, they placed the crown on his head. That Hildebrand did

not disavow these acts of his representatives, but availed himself of the alliances and aids to be derived from them, appeared to these downright captains abundantly sufficient to bind him in conscience and in honour. That the Pope had not the slightest intention of being so bound, unless it should chance to suit his own convenience, is, however, past dispute. Even in the nineteenth century he has found, in M. l'Abbé Jager, an apologist who absolves him from all responsibility for the acts of his legates at the Diet of Forcheim, because they were adopted without awaiting his own personal arrival. The Diet might just as reasonably have awaited the arrival of the Millennium.

The decretals of Rome, of Tribur, of Canossa, and of Forcheim, were now to bear their proper fruits—fruits of bitter taste, and of evil augury. At the moment when the cathedral of Mentz was pouring forth the crowds who had just listened to the coronation oath of Rudolf, the clash of arms, the cries of combatants, and the shrieks of the dying, mingled, strangely and mournfully, with the sacred anthems and the songs of revellers. An idle frolic of some Swabian soldiers had kindled into rage the sullen spirit with which the partisans of Henry had gazed on that unwelcome pageant; and the first rude and exasperated voice was echoed by thousands who learned, from those acclamations, the secret of their numbers and their strength. The discovery and the agitation spread from city to city, and roused the whole German people from the Rhine to the Oder. Men's hearts yearned over their exiled king. They remembered that, but twelve short years before, he had been basely stolen from his mother by churchmen, who had yet more basely corrupted him. They commemorated his courage, his courtesy, and his munificence. They pardoned his faults as the excesses of youth, and resented, as insults to themselves, the indignities of Canossa, and the treason of Forcheim. In this reflux of public opinion, the loyal and the brave, all who cherished the honours of the crown, and all who desired the independence of the state, were supported by the multitudes to whom the papal edicts against simony and clerical marriages were fraught with disaster, and by that still more numerous body who, at all times, lend their voices and their arms to swell the triumph of every rising cause. To this confederacy Rudolf had to oppose the alliance of the princes, secular and ecclesiastical, the devoted zeal of the Saxon people, and the secret support, rather than the frank and open countenance, of the Pope. The shock of these hostile powers was near and inevitable.

In the spring of 1077, tidings were spread throughout Germany of the Emperor's arrival to the northward of the Alps. From Fran-

conia, the seat of his house, from the fruitful province of Burgundy, and from the Bohemian mountains, he was greeted with an enthusiastic welcome. Many even of the Bavarians and Swabians revolted in his favour. His standard once more floated over all the greater citadels of the Rhine. He who, six months before, had fled from Spire a solitary wanderer, was now at the head of a powerful army, controlling the whole of Southern Germany, laying waste the territories of his rivals, and threatening them with a signal retribution.

Amidst the rising tempest the voice of Gregory was heard ; but it was no longer trumpet-tongued and battling with the storm. The supreme earthly judge, the dread avenger, had subsided into the pacific mediator. In the name of Peter he enjoined either king to send him a safe-conduct, that he might, in person, arbitrate between them and stop the effusion of Christian blood. A safe but an impracticable offer ; an indirect but significant avowal of neutrality between the sovereign he had so lately deposed and the sovereign whom, by his legates, he had so lately crowned ! Thus ignobly withdrawing from the contest he had kindled, Hildebrand returned from Canossa to the papal city. The Great Countess, as usual, attended as the commander of his guard. Rome received in triumph her new Germanicus, and decreed an ovation to his ever-faithful Agrippina.

While the glories of Canossa were thus celebrated by rejoicings in the Christian capital, they were expiated by blood in the plains of Saxony. Confiding in the solemn acts of the Pope and his legates, the Saxons had thronged to the defence of the crown of Rudolf, and they had sustained it undauntedly. But the bravest quailed at the intelligence that Gregory had disowned the cause of the Church and of their native land ; and that, even in the palace of the Lateran, the ambassadors of Henry were received with honours, and with a deference denied to the humbler envoys of his rival. Sagacity far inferior to that of Hildebrand could, at that time, have divined that the sword alone could decide such a quarrel—that the sword of Henry was the keener of the two—and that, by the cordial adoption of the cause of either, the Pope might draw *on* himself the vengeance of the conqueror. To pause, to vacillate, and to soothe, had therefore become the policy of the sovereign of the papal states ; but to be silent or inactive in such a strife would have been to abdicate one of the highest prerogatives of the Papacy. Pontifical legates traversed Europe. Pontifical epistles demanded the submission of the combatants. Pontifical warning denounced woes on the disobedient. But no pontifical voice explained who was to be obeyed or who opposed, what was to be done or what for-

borne. Discerning readers of these mandates understood them as an intimation that, on the victorious side (whichever that side might be) the pontifical power would ultimately be found.

The appeal from these dark oracles to the unambiguous sword was first made by the rival kings in the autumn of 1078. They met on the banks of the Stren, on the plains of Melrichstadt. Each was driven from the field with enormous loss ; Henry by his inveterate antagonist Otho ; Rudolf by Count Herbard, the lieutenant of Henry. Each claimed the victory. An issue so undecisive could draw from the circumspect Pontiff nothing more definite than renewed exhortations to rely on the Holy Peter ; and could urge him to no measure more hazardous than that of convening a new Council at the Lateran. There appeared the Imperial envoys with hollow vows of obedience, and Saxon messengers invoking some intelligible intimation of the judgment and purposes of the Apostolic See. Again the Pope listened, spoke, exhorted, threatened ; and left the bleeding world to interpret as it might the mystic sense of the Infallible.

To that brave and truth-loving people from whom, at the distance of four centuries, Luther was to rise for the deliverance of mankind, these subterfuges appeared in their real light. The Saxon annalist has preserved three letters sent by his countrymen on this occasion to Gregory, which he must have read with admiration and with shame. " You know, and the letters of your Holiness attest (such is their indignant remonstrance), that it was by no advice nor for any interest of ours, but for wrongs done to the Holy See, that you deposed our king, and forbade us, under fearful menaces, to acknowledge him. We have obeyed you at great danger, and at the expense of horrible sufferings. Many of us have lost their property and their lives, and have bequeathed hopeless poverty to their children. We who survive are without the means of subsistence, delivered over to the utmost agonies of distress. The reward of our sacrifices is, that he who was compelled to cast himself at your feet has been absolved without punishment, and has been permitted to crush us to the very abyss of misery. After our king had been solemnly deposed in a Synod, and another chosen in virtue of the Apostolic authority, the very matter thus decided is again brought into question. What especially perplexes us simple folk is, that the legates of Henry, though excommunicated by your legates, are well received at Rome. Holy Father, your piety assures us that you are guided by honourable, not by subtle views ; but we are too gross to understand them. We can only explain to you that this management of two parties has produced civil war, murder, pillage, conflagration. If we, helpless

sheep ! had failed in any point of duty, the vengeance of the Holy See would have overtaken us. Why exhibit so much forbearance when you have to do with wolves who have ravaged the Lord's fold ? We conjure you to look into your own heart, to remember your own honour, to fear the wrath of God, and for your own sake, if not for love of us, rescue yourself from responsibility for the torrents of blood poured out in our land."

To these pathetic appeals Gregory answered slowly and reluctantly, by disavowing the acts of his legates at Forcheim ; by extolling his own justice, courage, and disinterestedness ; by invoking the support of all orders of men in Germany ; and by assuring them, in scriptural language, of the salvation of such "as should persevere to the end." But the hour for blandishments had passed away. The day of wrath, and the power of the sword, had come.

The snow covered the earth, and the frost had chained the rivers, when, in the winter of 1079-80, the armies of Henry and Rudolf were drawn up, in hostile lines, at the village of Fladenheim, near Mulhausen. Henry was the assailant, but Rudolf, though driven with great loss from the field, was the conqueror ; for in that field the dreaded Otho again commanded, and by his skill and courage a rout was turned into a victory.

The intelligence arrived at Rome at the moment when Gregory was presiding there in the most numerous of the many councils he had convened at the Lateran. Long-suppressed shame for his ignoble indecision, the murmurs of the assembled prelates, a voice from Heaven audible, as we are told, to his sense alone, and above all the triumphant field of Fladenheim, combined to overcome his long-cherished but timid policy. Rising from his throne with the majesty of his earlier days, the Pope, in the names of Peter and of Paul, "of God, and of his holy mother Mary," excommunicated Henry, took from him the government of his states, deprived him of his royal rank, forbade all Christian people to receive him as their king, "gave, granted, and conceded" that Rudolf might rule the German and Italian Empire ; and with blessings on Rudolf's adherents, and curses on his foes, dissolved the assembly. Then, moved, as he believed, by a divine impulse, he proceeded to the altar, and uttered a prediction that ere the Church should celebrate the festival of the Prince of the Apostles, Henry, her rebellious outcast, should neither reign, nor live, to molest her.

A perilous prophecy ! Henry was no longer the exile of Tribur, nor the penitent of Canossa. Yet his own rage, on hearing of this new papal sentence, did not burn so fiercely as the wrath of his adherents.

With the sanction of thirty bishops, a new Anti-Pope, Guibert of Ravenna, was elected at Brixen ; and at every court in Europe Imperial embassies demanded support for the common cause of all temporal sovereigns. In every part of Germany troops were levied, and Henry marched at the head to crush the one German power in alliance with Rome. But that power was still animated by the Saxon spirit, and was still sustained by the claims of Rudolf, and by the genius of Otho.

On the bright dawn of an autumnal day his forces, drawn up on the smiling banks of the Elster, raised the sacred song of the Hebrews,—“God standeth in the congregation of princes ; he is a judge among Gods ;”—and flung themselves on the far-extended lines of Henry’s army ; who, with emulous devotion, met them with the hardly less sublime canticle,—“Te Deum laudamus.” Cries more welcome to the demons of war soon stilled these sacred strains ; cries of despair, of anguish, and of terror. They first rose from one of Henry’s squadrons, which, alarmed by the fall of their captain, receded ; and, in their retreat, spread through the rest a panic, a pause, and a momentary confusion. That moment was enough for the eagle glance of Otho. He rushed on the wavering Imperialists ; and, ere that bright sun had reached the meridian, thousands had fallen by the Saxon sword, or had perished in the blood-stained river. The victory was complete, the exultation rapturous. Shouts of glory to the God of battles, thanksgivings for the deliverance of Saxony, pæans of immortal honour to Otho, the noblest of her sons, soothed or exasperated the agonies of the dying ; when the triumph was turned into sudden and irremediable mourning. On the field which had, apparently, secured his crown, Rudolf himself had fallen. He fell by an illustrious arm. Godfrey of Bouillon, the hero of the *Jerusalem Delivered*, struck the fatal blow. Another sword severed the right hand from the arm of Rudolf. “It is the hand,” he cried, as his glazing eye rested on it, “with which I confirmed my fealty to Henry my lord.” At once elevated by so signal a victory, and depressed by these penitent misgivings, his spirit passed away, leaving his adherents to the mercy of his rival.

The same sun which witnessed the ruin of Henry’s army on the Elster, looked down on a conflict, in which, on that eventful morning, the forces of Matilda, in the Mantuan territory, fled before his own. He now, once more, descended into Italy. He came, not, as formerly, a pilgrim and an exile ; but at the head of an army devoted to his person, and defying all carnal enemies, and all spiritual censures. He came to encounter Hildebrand, destitute of all Trans-alpine alliances, and supported, even in Italy, by no power but that

of Matilda ; for the Norman Duke of Apulia was far away, attempting the conquest of the Eastern capital and Empire. But Henry left in his rear the invincible Saxons, and the hero who commanded them. To prevent a diversion in that quarter the Emperor proposed to abdicate his dominion in Saxony in favour of Conrad, his son. But Otho (a merry talker, as his annalist informs us) rejected the project with the remark, that "the calf of a vicious bull usually proved vicious." Leaving, therefore, this implacable enemy to his machinations, the Emperor pressed forward ; and before the summer of 1080, the citizens of Rome saw, from their walls, the German standards in hostile array in the Campagna.

In the presence of such danger the gallant spirit of the aged Pope once more rose and exulted. He convened a Synod to attest his last defiance of his formidable enemy. He exhorted the German princes to elect a successor to Rudolf. In letters of impassioned eloquence, he again maintained his supremacy over all the kings and rulers of mankind. He welcomed persecution as the badge of his holy calling ; and, while the besiegers were at the gates, he disposed (at least in words) of royal crowns, and distant provinces. Matilda supplied him with money, which, for a while, tranquillised the Roman populace. He himself, as we are assured, wrought miracles to extinguish conflagrations kindled by their treachery. In language such as martyrs use, he consoled the partners of his sufferings. In language such as heroes breathe, he animated the defenders of the city. The siege, or blockade, continued for three years uninterruptedly, except when Henry's troops were driven, by the deadly heats of autumn, to the neighbouring hills. Distress, and, it is alleged, bribery, at length subdued the courage of the garrison. On every side clamours were heard for peace ; for Henry demanded, as the terms of peace, nothing more than the recognition of his Imperial title, and his coronation by the hands of Gregory. The conscience, perhaps the pride, of Gregory revolted against the proposal. His invincible will opposed and silenced the outcries of the famished multitudes ; nor could their entreaties, or their threats, extort from him more than a promise that, in the approaching winter, he would propose the question to a Pontifical Synod. It met, by the permission of Henry, on the 30th of November, 1083. It was the latest council of Gregory's pontificate. A few bishops, faithful to their chief and to his cause, now occupied the seats so often thronged by mitred churchmen. Every pallid cheek and anxious eye was turned to him who occupied the loftier throne in the centre of that agitated assembly. He rose, and the half-uttered suggestions of fear and human policy were hushed into deep stillness as he spoke. He spoke of the glorious

example, of the light affliction, and of the eternal reward, of martyrs for the faith. He spoke, as dying fathers speak to their children, of peace, and hope, and of consolation. But he spoke also, as inspired prophets spake of yore to the Kings of Israel, denouncing the swift vengeance of Heaven against his oppressor. The enraptured audience exclaimed that they had heard the voice of an angel, not of a man. Gregory dismissed the assembly, and calmly prepared for whatever extremity of distress might await him.

It did not linger. In the spring of 1084 the garrison was overpowered, the gates were thrown open to the besiegers, and Gregory sought a precarious refuge in the Castle of St Angelo. He left the great Church of the Lateran as a theatre for the triumph of his antagonist and his rival. Seated on the Apostolic throne, Guibert, the Anti-Pope of Brixen, was consecrated there by the title of Clement the Third ; and then, as the successor of Peter, he placed the crown of Germany and of Italy on the brows of Henry, and of Bertha, as they knelt before him.

And now Henry had, or seemed to have, in his grasp the author of the shame of Canossa, of the anathemas of the Lateran, and of the civil wars and rebellions of the Empire. The base populace of Rome were already anticipating, with sanguinary joy, the humiliation, perhaps the death, of the noblest spirit who had reigned there since the slaughter of Julius. The approaching catastrophe, whatever might be its form, Gregory was prepared to meet, with a serene confidence in God, and a haughty defiance of man. A few hours more, and the Castle of St Angelo must have yielded to famine or to assault ; when the aged Pope, in the very agony of his fate, gathered the reward of the policy with which he had cemented the alliance between the Papacy and the Norman conquerors of the South of Italy. Robert Guiscard, returning from Constantinople, flew to the rescue of his Suzerain. Scouts announced to Henry the approach of a mighty host, in which the Norman battle-axe, and the cross, were strangely united with the Saracenic cimeter, and the crescent. A precipitate retreat scarcely rescued his enfeebled troops from the impending danger. He abandoned his prey in a fever of disappointment. Unable to slake his thirst for vengeance, he might perhaps allay it by surprising the Great Countess, and overwhelming her forces, still in arms in the Modenese. But he was himself surprised in the attempt by her superior skill and vigilance. Shouts for St Peter and Matilda roused the retreating Imperialists by night, near the Castle of Sorbaria. They retired across the Alps, with such a loss of men, of officers, and of treasure, as disabled them from any further enterprises.

The Emperor returned into Germany to reign undisturbed by civil

war ; for the great Otho was dead, and Herman of Luxemburg, who had assumed the Imperial title, was permitted to abdicate it with contemptuous impunity. Henry returned, however, to prepare for new conflicts with the Papacy—to drain the cup of toil, of danger, and of distress—and to die, at length, with a heart broken by the parricidal cruelty of his son. No prayers were said, and no requiem sung, over the unhallowed grave which received the bones of the excommunicated Monarch. Yet they were committed to the earth with the best and the kindest obsequies. The pity of his enemies, the lamentation of his subjects, and the unbidden tears of the poor, the widows, and the orphans, who crowded round the bier of their benefactor, rendered his tomb not less sacred than if it had been blessed by the united prayers of the whole Christian Episcopacy. Those unbribed mourners wept over a Prince to whom God had given a large heart and a capacious mind ; but who had derived, from canonised Bishops, a corrupting education, and from a too early and too unchequered prosperity, the development of every base and cruel appetite ; but to whom calamity had imparted a self-dominion, from which none could withhold his respect, and an active sympathy with sorrow, to which none could refuse his love.

With happier fortunes, as, indeed, with loftier virtues, Matilda continued, for twenty-five years, to wage war in defence of the Apostolic See. After a life which might seem to belong to the province of romance rather than of history, she died at the age of seventy-five, bequeathing to the world a name second, in the annals of her age, to none but that of Hildebrand himself.

To him the Norman rescue of the Papal city brought only a momentary relief. He returned in triumph to the Lateran. But, within a few hours, he looked from the walls of that ancient palace on a scene of woe such as, till then, had never passed before him. A sanguinary contest was raging between the forces of Robert and the citizens attached to Henry. Every street was barricaded ; every house had become a fortress. The pealing of bells, the clash of arms, cries of fury, and shrieks of despair, assailed his ears in dismal concert. When the sun set behind the Tuscan hills on this scene of desolation, another light, and a still more fearful struggle, succeeded. Flames ascended at once from every quarter. They leaped from house to house, enveloping and destroying whatever was most splendid or most sacred, in the edifices of mediæval Rome. Amidst the roar of the conflagration they had kindled, and by its portentous light, the fierce Saracens, and the ruthless Northmen, revelled in plunder, lust, and carnage, like demons by the glare of their native pandemonium. Gregory gazed with agony on the real and present

aspect of civil war. Perhaps he thought with penitence on the wars he had kindled beyond the Alps. Two-thirds of the city perished. Every convent was violated, every altar profaned, and multitudes driven away into perpetual and hopeless slavery.

Himself a voluntary exile, Gregory sought, in the Castle of Salerno, and under the protection of the Normans, the security he could no longer find among his own exasperated subjects. Age and anxiety weighed heavily upon him. An unwonted lassitude depressed a frame till now incapable of fatigue. He recognized the summons of death, and his soul rose with unconquerable power to entertain that awful visitant. He summoned round his bed the Bishops and Cardinals who had attended his flight from Rome. He passed before them, in firm and rapid retrospect, the incidents of his eventful life. He maintained the truth of the great principles by which it had been governed from the commencement to the close. He named his three immediate successors in the Papacy. He assured his weeping friends of his intercession for them in heaven. He forgave, and blessed, and absolved his enemies, though with the resolute exceptions of the Emperor and the Anti-Pope. He then composed himself to die. His faltering lips had closed on the transubstantiated elements. The final unction had given assurance that the body, so soon to be committed to the dust, would rise again in honour and incorruption. Anxious to catch the last accents of that once oracular voice, the mourners were bending over him, when, struggling in the very grasp of death, he collected, for one last effort, his failing powers, and breathed out his spirit with the indignant exclamation — "I have loved righteousness, and hated iniquity : and therefore I die in exile !"

It was not permitted, even to the genius of Hildebrand, to condense, into a single sentence, an epitome of such a life as his. It was a life scarcely intelligible to his own generation, or to himself, nor indeed to our age, except by the light of that ecclesiastical history in which it forms so important an era.

It had ill beseemed the inspired wisdom of the tent-maker of Tarsus, and of the Galilean fishermen, to have founded on any other than a popular basis, a society destined to encounter the enmity of the dominant few, by the zeal of the devoted many. From the extant monuments of their lives and writings, it accordingly appears that they conceded to the lay multitude an ample share in the finance, the discipline, and the legislation of the collective body. The deacons were the tribunes of the Christian people. This was the age of Proselytism.

In the sad and solemn times which followed, ecclesiastical authority became austere and arbitrary, and submission to it enthusiastic. Martyrs, in the contemplation of mortal agonies, and of an opening paradise, had no thoughts for the adjustment and balancing of sacerdotal powers. They who braved the wild beasts of the amphitheatre, or the ascetic rigours of the wilderness, were the heroes of the Church. The rest sank into a degraded caste. But all laid bare their souls at the confessional. All acknowledged a dominion which, discountenanced by the state, sustained itself by extreme and recondite maxims of government. In virtue of such maxims, the Episcopal order encroached on every other. The vicarious attributes of Deity were ascribed to those who ministered at the altar. There, and at the font, gifts of inestimable price were placed, in popular belief, at the disposal of the priest; whose miracles, though unattested by sense or consciousness, threw into the shade the mightiest works of Moses and of Christ. This was the age of Persecution.

Heretics arose. To refute them from the sacred text was sometimes difficult, always hazardous. It was easier to silence them by a living authority. The Bishops came forth as the elect depositaries of an unwritten code. Tradition became the rule of the Christian world. It might crush the errors of Arius, but it might sustain the usurpations of Ambrose. This was the age of Controversy.

Constantine saw the miraculous cross, and worshipped. He confirmed to the Christian hierarchy all their original, and all their acquired, powers. This was the age of the Church and State alliance.

The seat of empire was transferred from the Tiber to the Bosphorus. The Roman bishop and clergy seized on the vacant inheritance of abdicated authority. The Pope became the virtual sovereign of the Roman city. The Greeks and Latins became ecclesiastical rivals. Then was first heard the Roman watchword, and rallying cry, of the Visible Unity of the Church. This was the age of Papal Independence.

Goths, Vandals, Huns, Bulgarians, Franks, and Lombards, conquered the dominions of Cæsar. But they became the converts and tributaries of Peter. The repulse of the Saracens by Charles Martel gave to Europe a new empire, to the Church a second Constantine. This was the age of Barbaric Invasion.

Europe became one vast assemblage of military states. The lands were everywhere partitioned by the conquerors among their liegemen, who, having bound themselves to use their swords in their lords' defence, imposed a similar obligation on their own tenants,

who, in turn, exacted it from their subordinate vassals. This was the age of Feudalism and of Hildebrand.

He ascended the Apostolic throne, therefore, armed with prescriptions in favour of the loftiest claims of the hierarchy, thus reaching back almost to the apostolic times. But he found in the Papal armoury other weapons scarcely less keen, though of a more recent fabric. Of these the most effective were the intimate alliance of the Roman See with the monastic orders, and the re-appearance, in theological debate, of that mystic word which, seven centuries before, had wrought such prodigies at Nicæa. He who first taught men to speak of an Hypostatic change beneath unchanging forms, may have taught them to use words without meaning. But though he added little or nothing to the received doctrines of the Church, he made an incalculable addition to the sacerdotal power.

To grasp, to multiply, and to employ these resources in such a manner as to render the Roman Pontiff the suzerain of the civilised world, was the end for which Hildebrand lived—an unworthy end, if contrasted with the high and holy purposes of the Gospel—an end even hateful, if contrasted with the free and generous spirit in which the primitive founders of the Church had established and inculcated her liberties—yet an end which might well allure a noble spirit in the eleventh century, and the attainment of which (so far as it was attained) may be now acknowledged to have been conducive, perhaps essential, to the progress of Christianity and civilisation.

To the spiritual despotism of Rome in the middle ages may, indeed, be traced a long series of errors and crimes, of wars and persecutions. Yet the Papal dynasty was the triumphant antagonist of another despotism the most galling, the most debasing, and otherwise the most irremediable, under which Europe had ever groaned. The centralisation of ecclesiastical power more than balanced the isolating spirit of the feudal oligarchies. The vassal of Western, and the serf of Eastern Europe, might otherwise, at this day, have been in the same social state, and military autocracies might now be occupying the place of our constitutional or paternal governments. Hildebrand's despotism, with whatever inconsistency, sought to guide mankind, by moral impulses, to a more than human sanctity. The feudal despotism with which he waged war, sought, with a stern consistency, to degrade them into beasts of prey, or beasts of burden. It was the conflict of mental with physical power, of literature with ignorance, of religion with injustice and debauchery. To the Popes of the middle ages was assigned a province, the abandonment of which would have plunged the Church and the World into the same hopeless slavery. To Pope Gregory the Seventh were first given the

genius and the courage to raise himself and his successors to the level of that high vocation.

Yet Hildebrand was the founder of a tyranny only less odious than that which he arrested, and was apparently actuated by an ambition neither less proud, selfish, nor reckless, than that of his secular antagonists. In the great economy of Providence, human agency is ever alloyed by some base motives ; and the noblest success recorded by history must still be purchased at the price of some great ultimate disaster.

To the title of the Czar Peter of the Church, conferred on him by M. Guizot, Hildebrand's only claim is, that by the energy of his will, he moulded her institutions, and her habits of thought, to his own purposes. But the Czar wrought in the spirit of an architect who invents, arranges, and executes his own plan : Hildebrand in the spirit of a builder, erecting by divine command a temple of which the divine hand had drawn the design, and provided the materials. His faith in what he judged to be the purposes and the will of Heaven, was not merely sublime, but astounding. He is everywhere depicted, in his own letters, the habitual denizen of that bright region which the damps of fear never penetrate, and the shadows of doubt never overcast.

To extol him as one of those Christian stoics whom the wreck of worlds could not divert from the straight paths of integrity and truth, is a mere extravagance. His policy was Imperial ; his resources and his arts Sacerdotal. Anathemas and flatteries, stern defiance and subtle insinuations, invectives such as might have been thundered by Genseric, and apologies such as might have been whispered by Augustulus, succeed each other in his story, with no visible trace of hesitation or of shame. Even his professed orthodoxy is rendered questionable by his conduct and language towards Berengarius, the great opponent of transubstantiation. With William of England, Philip of France, and Robert of Apulia, and even with Henry of Germany, he temporised at the expense of his own principles as often as the sacrifice seemed advantageous. "Nature gave horns to Bulls." To aspiring and belligerent Churchmen she gave Dissimulation and Artifice.

Our exhausted space forbids the attempt to analyse or delineate the personal character of the great founder of the spiritual despotism of Rome. His acts must stand in place of such a portraiture. He found the Papacy dependent on the Empire : he sustained her by alliances almost commensurate with the Italian Peninsula. He found the Papacy electoral by the Roman people and clergy : he left it electoral by a college of Papal nomination. He found the

Emperor the virtual patron of the Holy See: he wrested that power from his hands. He found the secular clergy the allies and dependants of the secular power: he converted them into the inalienable auxiliaries of his own. He found the higher ecclesiastics in servitude to the temporal sovereigns: he delivered them from that yoke to subjugate them to the Roman Tiara. He found the patronage of the Church the mere desecrated spoil and merchandise of princes: he reduced it within the dominion of the Supreme Pontiff. He is celebrated as the reformer of the impure and profane abuses of his age: he is more justly entitled to the praise of having left the impress of his own gigantic character on the history of all the ages which have succeeded him.

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

It was a noble design which died with Robert Southey. His History of the Monastic Orders would not perhaps have poured a large tribute of philosophy, divine or human, into the ocean of knowledge; but how graceful would have been the flow of that transparent narrative, and how would it have reflected and enhanced the beauty of every rich champaign, and of every towering promontory, along which it would have swept! Peremptory and dogmatical as he was, he addressed himself to the task of instructing his own and future generations, with a just sense of the dignity, and of the responsibilities, of that high office. He was too brave a man, and too sound a Protestant, to shrink from any aspect of truth; nor would he ever have supposed that he could promote a legitimate object of ecclesiastical history, by impairing the well-earned fame of any of the worthies of the Church, because they had been entangled in the sophistries, or the superstitions, of the ages in which they flourished.

M. Chavin de Malan has adopted the project of our fellow-countryman, and is publishing a Monastic History in a series of fragments, among which is a volume on the founder and the progress of the Franciscan Order. Though among the most passionate and uncompromising devotees of the Church of Rome, M. Chavin de Malan is also in one sense a Protestant. He protests against any exercise of human reason in examining any dogma which that Church inculcates, or any fact which she alleges. The most merciless of her cruelties affect him with no indignation, the silliest of her prodigies with no shame, the basest of her superstitions with no contempt. Her veriest dotage is venerable in his eyes. Even the atrocities of Innocent the Third seem, to this all-extolling eulogist, but to augment the triumph and the glories of his reign. If the soul of the confessor of Simon de Montfort, retaining all the passions and all the prejudices of that æra, should transmigrate into a Doctor of the Sorbonne, conversant with the arts and literature of

our own times, the result might be the production of such an Ecclesiastical History as that of which M. de Malan has given us a specimen—elaborate in research, glowing in style, vivid in portraiture ; utterly reckless and indiscriminate in belief ; extravagant, up to the very verge of idolatry, in applause ; and familiar, far beyond the verge of indecorum, with the most awful topics and objects of the Christian faith.

The episode of which M. Chavin de Malan disposes in his *Life of Francis of Assisi*, is among the most curious and important in the annals of the Church ; and the materials for such a biography are more than usually copious and authentic. First in order are the extant writings,—consisting chiefly of letters, colloquies, poems, and predictions,—of the Saint himself. His earliest biographer, Thomas of Celano, was his follower and his personal friend. Three of the intimate associates of the Saint (one of them his confessor) compiled a joint narrative of his miracles and his labours. Bonaventura, himself a General of the Franciscan Order, wrote a celebrated *Life of the Founder*, whom in his infancy he had seen. And lastly, there is a chronicle called *Fioretti di San Francisco*, which, though not written till half a century after his death, has always been held in much esteem by the hagiographers. Within the last thirty years a new edition of it has been published at Verona. On these five authorities all the more recent narratives are founded. Yet the works of Thomas de Celano, and of the “*Tres Socii*,” with the writings of Francis himself, are the only sources of contemporary intelligence strictly so called ; although Bonaventura and the chronicler of the *Fioretti* had large opportunities of ascertaining the reality of the facts they have related. How far they availed themselves of that advantage, may be partly inferred from the following brief epitome of those occurrences.

The city of Assisi, in Umbria, was a mart of some importance in the latter half of the twelfth century. At that period it could boast no merchant more adventurous or successful than Pietro Bernadone di Mericoni. Happy in a thriving trade, and happier still in an affectionate wife, he was above all happy in the prospect of the future eminence of his son Francisco. The foremost in every feat of arms, and the gayest in every festival, the youth was at the same time assiduous in the counting-house ; and though his expenditure was profuse, it still flowed in such channels as to attest the princely munificence of his spirit. The brightest eyes in Assisi, dazzled by so many graces, and the most reverend brows there, acknowledging such early wisdom, were alike bent with complacency towards him ; and all conspired to sustain his father's belief, that, in his person,

the name of Bernadone would rival the proudest of those whom neither Transalpine conquerors, nor the Majesty of the Tiara, disdained to propitiate in the guilds of Venice or of Pisa.

Uniform, alas ! is the dirge of all the generations of mankind, over hopes blossoming but to die. In a combat with the citizens of Perugia, Francis was taken prisoner ; and, after a captivity of twelve months, was released only to encounter a disease, which, at the dawn of manhood, brought him within view of the gates of death. Long, earnest, and inquisitive was his gaze into the inscrutable abyss on which they open ; and when at length he returned to the duties of life, it was in the awe-stricken spirit of one to whom those dread realities had been unveiled. The world one complicated imposture, all sensible delights so many polluting vanities, human praise and censure but the tinkling of the cymbals,—what remained but to spurn these empty shadows, that so he might grasp the one imperishable object of man's sublunary existence ? His alms became lavish. His days and nights were consumed in devout exercises. Prostrate in the crowded church, or in the recesses of the forest, his agitated frame attested the conflict of his mind. He exchanged dresses with a tattered mendicant, and pressed to his bosom a wretch rendered loathsome by leprosy. But as he gradually gathered strength from these self-conquests, or as returning health restored the tone and vigour of his nerves, his thoughts, reverting to the lower world, wandered in search of victories of another order.

Walter of Brienne was in arms in the Neapolitan States against the Emperor ; the weak opposed to the powerful ; the Italian to the German ; the Guelph to the Ghibelline ; and Francis laid him down to sleep, resolved that, with the return of day, he would join the "Gentle Count," as he was usually called, in resisting the oppressor to the death. In his slumbers a vast armoury seemed to open to his view ; and a voice commanded him to select from the burnished weapons with which it was hung, such as he could most effectually wield against the impious enemy of the Church. The dreamer awoke ; and in prompt submission to the celestial mandate, laid aside the serge gown and modest bonnet of his craft, and exhibited himself to his admiring fellow-citizens armed cap-à-pie, and urging on his war-horse towards the encampment of his destined leader. At Spoleto fatigue arrested his course. Again he slept, and again the voice was heard. It announced to him that the martial implements of his former vision were not, as he had supposed, such as are borne beneath a knightly banner against a carnal adversary, but arms of spiritual temper, to be directed, in his native city, against the

invisible powers of darkness. He listened and obeyed ; and Assisi re-opened her gates to her returning warrior, resolute to break a lance with a more fearful foe than was ever sent by the Emperor into the field.

To superficial judges it probably appeared as if that dread antagonist had won an easy triumph over his young assailant. For Francis was seen once more the graceful leader of the civic revels, bearing in his hand the sceptre of the king of frolic, and followed by a joyous band, who made the old streets echo with their songs. As that strain arose, however, a dark shadow gathered over the countenance of the leader, and amid the general chorus his voice was unheard. "Why so grave, Francis? Art thou going to be married?" exclaimed one of the carollers. "I am," answered Francis, "and to a lady of such rank, wealth, and beauty, that the world cannot produce her like." He burst from the jocund throng in search of her, and was ere long in her embrace. He vowed to take her "for his wedded wife, for better for worse, to love and to cherish till death should them part." The lady was Poverty. The greatest poet of Italy and the greatest orator of France have celebrated their nuptials. But neither Dante nor Bossuet was the inventor of the parable. It was ever on the lips of Francis himself, that Poverty was his bride, that he was her devoted husband, and the whole Franciscan order their offspring.

His fidelity to his betrothed lady was inviolate, but was not unassailed by temptation. Pleasure, wealth, ambition, were the syrens who, with witching looks and songs, attempted to divert him from his Penelope ; and when he could no longer combat, he at least could fly, the fascination. Wandering in the Umbrian hills, he wept and fasted, and communed with the works of God ; till raised to communion with their Maker, he knelt in a rustic church which the piety of ancient times had consecrated there to the memory of St Damiano.

The voice which directed his path in life was heard again. "Seest thou not," it cried, "that my temple is falling into ruins? Restore it." Again the spirit of interpretation failed him. Instead of addressing himself to renovate the spiritual, he undertook the repairs of the material fabric—an arduous task for the future spouse of Poverty ! But obedience was indispensable. Rising from his knees, he hastened to his father's warehouse ; laded a stout palfrey with silks and embroideries ; sold both horse and goods at the neighbouring town of Foligno ; and laid down the money at the feet of the officiating priest of St Damiano. The more cautious churchman rejected the gold. Francis indignantly cast it into the mire ; and

vowed that the building so solemnly committed to his care should become his dwelling-place and his home, till the Divine behest had been fulfilled.

During all this time hallucinations of his own, though of a far different kind, had haunted the brain of the respectable Pietro Bernadone. Grouping into forms ever new and brilliant, like spangles shaken in a kaleidoscope, the ideas of bales and bills of lading, of sea risks and of supercargoes, had combined with those of loans to reckless crusaders and of the supply of hostile camps, to form one gorgeous El Dorado, when intelligence of the loss of his draperies, his pack-horse, and his son, restored him to the waking world and to himself. The goods and the quadruped were gone irrevocably. But as the exasperated father paced the streets of Assisi, a figure emaciated with fasts and vigils, squalid with dirt, and assailed by the filthy missiles of a hooting rabble, approached him, and as it moved onwards with a measured tread, an uplifted eye, and a serene aspect, it revealed to the old merchant, in this very sorry spectacle of dignified suffering, the long-cherished object of his ambitious hopes. What biographer even now can tell the sequel without a blush ! Francis was hurried away from his persecutors and his admirers, in the grasp of the elder Bernadone, and, from his vigorous arm, received that kind of chastisement under which heroism itself ceases to be sublime. The incensed judge then passed a chain round the body of the youth, and left him in a kind of domestic prison, there to satiate his love for penances until his own return from a journey to which the inexorable demands of his commerce had summoned him.

Wiser far and more gentle was the custody to which Francis was transferred, and a voice was heard in his penitentiary full of a more genuine inspiration than any of those by which his steps had been hitherto guided. It was the voice of his mother, soothing her half-distracted child in accents as calm and as holy as those which first broke the silence of Eden. It spoke to him of maternal love, of reconciliation, and of peace. But it addressed him in vain. He was bound to leave father and mother, and to cleave to his betrothed wife, and to the duties of that indissoluble alliance. Convinced at length of the vanity, perhaps trembling at the impiety, of any further resistance, his mother threw open his prison doors, and permitted him to escape to his sanctuary at St Damiano.

In those hallowed precincts Francis found courage to oppose, and constancy to disarm, the rage with which he was pursued by his father. Gradually, but surely, the mind of the old man embraced the discovery, that, though dwelling on the same planet, he and his son were inhabitants of different worlds. From that conviction

he advanced with incomparable steadiness to the practical results involved in it. Why, he inquired, should a churchman, to whom all earthly interests were as the fine dust in the balance, retain the price of the pack-horse and of his pack? The priest of St Damiano immediately restored the scattered gold, which he had providently gathered up. Why should a youth, who despised all treasures but those laid up in heaven, retain his prospective right to a sublunary inheritance? A renunciation of it was at once drawn up, signed, and placed in his hands. Why should a candidate for cowl and scapulary retain the goodly apparel in which he had reached his place of refuge? In a few moments the young probationer stood before him in his shirt. Carefully packing up the clothes, the parchment, and the gold, the merchant returned to accumulate more gold at Assisi. And here history takes her leave of him; without regret and without applause, but not without a sullen acknowledgment that, after all, it was from the mortal Pietro that the immortal Francis derived one inheritance which he could not renounce—the inheritance of that inflexible decision of purpose which elevated the father to distinction among the worshippers of Mammon, and the son to eminence among the saints of Christendom.

It was indeed “an obstinate hill to climb.” An orphan with living parents, a beggar entitled to a splendid patrimony, he traversed the mountains with the freedom of soul known only to those for whom the smiles of fortune have no charm, and her frowns no terror. Chanting divine canticles as he went, his voice attracted the banditti who lurked in those fastnesses. They tossed the worthless prize contemptuously into a snow drift. Half frozen, he crawled to a neighbouring monastery, and was employed by the monks as a scullion. He returned to the scene of his former revels; and obtained the cloak, the leathern girdle, and the staff, of a pilgrim, as an alms from one who, in those brilliant days, had confessed his superiority in every graceful art and in every feat of chivalry. With the dress, he assumed the spirit, of a pilgrim; and devoted himself to the relief of the sorrows of those who like himself, though for a very different reason, were estranged from a cold and a fastidious world.

The Crusaders had at this period introduced the Leprosy of the East into all the countries embracing the Mediterranean Sea. A ritual was compiled for the purpose of celebrating with impressive solemnity the removal of the victims of that fearful malady from all intercourse with their fellow-Christians. It was a pathetic and melancholy service, in which the sternest interdict was softened by words of consolation and of pity. Nor were they words of empty

ceremonial. A sentiment of reverence towards those miserable sufferers was widely diffused throughout the whole of Europe. The obscurity which hung over the origin, the nature, and the cure of the disease, and the mysterious connexion in which it stood to the warfare for the Holy Sepulchre, had induced that wonder-loving age to invest it with a kind of sacred character. The churchmen of the times availed themselves skilfully and kindly of this popular feeling. They taught that Christ himself had regarded the leprous with peculiar tenderness; and not content to enforce this lesson from those parts of the evangelic narrative which really confirm it, they advanced, by the aid of the Vulgate, further still; and quoted from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, a prophecy in which, as they maintained, the Messiah himself was foretold under the image of a leper. "Nos putavimus eum quasi *Leprosus*, percussus a Deo, et humiliatum." Kings and princes visited, countesses ministered to them, saints (as it was believed) wrought miracles for their cure, and almost every considerable city erected hospitals for their reception and relief.

Some time before his betrothment to Poverty, Francis, crossing on horseback the plain which surrounds Assisi, unexpectedly drew near to a leper. Controlling his involuntary disgust, the rider dismounted and advanced to greet and to succour him; but the leper instantaneously disappeared. St Bonaventura is sponsor for the sequel of the tale. He who assumed this deplorable semblance was, in reality, no other than the awful Being whom the typical language of Isaiah had adumbrated. Little wonder, then, that after his vows had been plighted to his austere bride, Francis had faith to see, and charity to love, even in the leprous, the imperishable traces of the Divine image in which man was created, and the brethren of the Divine sufferer by whom man was redeemed.

Yet, despite this triumph of the spiritual discernment over the carnal sense, neither faith nor charity could subdue his natural terror in the prospect of a continued and familiar intercourse with such associates. Some distinct disclosure of the Divine will was still requisite to such a self-immolation; and such disclosures were never long denied to him. The now familiar voice was heard anew. "Hate what thou hast hitherto loved," it cried; "Love what thou hast hitherto hated." He listened, and became an inmate of the Leprous Hospital at Assisi. With his own hands he washed the feet and dressed the sores of the lepers; and once at least reverently applied his lips to such a wound. The man (so says St Bonaventura) instantly became whole. "Whether shall we most admire," he exclaims, "the miraculous power, or the courageous humility of

that kiss?" A question to be asked of those who believe in both. But even they who reject the miracle, will revere the lovingkindness of such a sojourn among such unhappy outcasts.

In later days Francis became the father and the apostle of the leprous; and when weightier cares withdrew him in person from that charge, his heart still turned towards them with a father's yearnings. Among his numerous followers, were some who, though destitute of the higher gifts of intellect, were largely endowed with the heroism of self-denying love. James, surnamed the Simple, was amongst the most conspicuous of them; and in those abodes of woe he earned the glorious title of steward and physician of the leprous. It happened that, in his simplicity, James brought one of his patients to worship at a much-frequented church, and there received from Francis the rebuke so well merited for his indiscretion. The heart of the sick man was oppressed as he listened to the censure pronounced on his benefactor; and the heart of Francis was moved within him to perceive that he had thus inadvertently added to the burden of the heavy-laden. He fell at the leper's feet, implored his forgiveness, sat down with him to eat out of the same dish, embraced and dismissed him! Had he grasped every subtle distinction of the *Summa Theologiæ* itself, or had he even built up that stupendous monument of the learning of his age, it would have been a lower title to the honours of canonisation.

The church of St Damiano still lay in ruins. The command to rebuild it was still unrevoked. Ill success had followed the attempt to extract the requisite funds from the hoards of the old merchant. Plutus, his inexorable father, had been invoked in vain. Poverty, his affianced wife, might be more propitious. He wooed her in the form she loves best. In the dress and character of a beggar, he traversed the city through which he had been wont to pass as at once the gayest of her troubadours, the bravest of her captains, and the most sumptuous of her merchants. Assisi had her witty men who jeered, her wise men who looked grave, and her respectable men who were scandalised, as this strange apparition invoked their alms in the names of the Virgin and of St Damiano. Solemn heads were shaken at the sight, in allusion to the supposed state of the brain of the mendicant. But the sarcasms of the facetious, and the conclusive objections of the sensible, fell on Francis like arrows rebounding from the scales of Behemoth. His energy silenced and repelled them all. Insuperable difficulties gave way before him. The squalid lazar became the inspiring genius of the architect, the paymaster of the builders, the menial drudge of the workman. Sometimes he came with money in his hand, some-

times with stones and mortar on his back. At his bidding, nave, chancel, arches, roof, and towers, rose from their foundations. The sacred edifice appeared in renovated splendour. The heavenly precept was obeyed.

Prompt and decisive was the reaction of popular feeling. Instead of debating whether this strange mortal was rogue or maniac, it was now argued that he must be either a necromancer or a saint. The wise and more charitable opinion prevailed. Near to the city was a ruined church sacred to the prince of the apostles. Confident in his late success, Francis rather demanded than implored contributions for rebuilding it. Purses were emptied into his hands, and speedily the dome of St Peter looked down in all its pristine dignity on the marts and battlements of Assisi.

There were no church-building commissioners in those days. In their stead, a half-starved youth in the rags of a bedesman moved along the streets of his native city, appealing to every passer-by, in quiet tones and earnest words, and with looks still more persuasive, to aid him in reconstructing the chapel of La Porzioncula; a shrine of Our Lady of Angels, of which the remains may yet be seen, at once hallowing and adorning the quiet meadow by which Assisi is surrounded. "He wept to think upon her stones, it grieved him to see her in the dust." Vows were uttered, processions formed, jewels, plate, and gold were laid at the feet of the gentle enthusiast: and Mary with her attendant angels rejoiced (so at least it was devoutly believed) over the number and the zeal of the worshippers who once more thronged the courts erected in honour of her name.

From that devout company he was not often absent, by whose pious zeal the work had been accomplished. As he knelt before the altar, the oracular voice, so often heard before, again broke in upon the silence of his soul. It cried, "Take nothing for your journey, neither staves nor scrip, neither bread nor money, neither have two coats a-piece." A caviller, in the plight to which Francis was reduced already, might have evaded such an injunction. But Francis was no caviller. The poor fragment left to him of this world's goods, his shoes, his staff, his leathern girdle, and his empty purse, were abandoned; and in his coarse cloak of serge, drawn round him with a common cord, he might defy men and devils to plunge him more deeply in the lack of this world's wealth, or to rekindle in his heart the passion for it.

And now were consummated his nuptials with his betrothed spouse. Dante has composed the Epithalamium in the eleventh Canto of the *Paradiso*:—

"Not long the period from his glorious birth,
 When, with extraordinary virtue blest,
 This wondrous Son began to comfort earth ;
 Bearing, while yet a child, his father's ire,
 For sake of her whom all as death detest,
 And banish from the gate of their desire.
 Before the spiritual court, before
 His father, too, he took her for his own :
 From day to day then loved her more and more.

* * * *

But lest my language be not clearly seen,
 Know, that in speaking of these lovers twain,
 Francis and Poverty henceforth I mean.
 Their joyful looks, with pleasant concord fraught,
 Where love and sweetness might be seen to reign,
 Were unto others cause of holy thought." *

Nor did Bossuet himself disdain to emulate this part of the "divine comedy." In the panegyric bestowed on the saint by the great orator, Francis is introduced as thus addressing his bride:—

"Ma chère Pauvreté, si basse que soit ton extraction selon le jugement des hommes, je t'estime depuis que mon maître t'a épousée. Et certes," proceeds the preacher, "il avait raison, Chrétiens ! Si un roi épouse une fille de basse extraction, elle devient reine ; on en murmure quelque temps, mais enfin on la reconnaît : elle est ennoblie par le mariage du prince." "Oh pauvres ! que vous êtes heureux ! parce qu'à vous appartient le royaume de Dieu. Heureux donc mille et mille fois, le pauvre François ; le plus ardent, le plus transporté, et, si j'ose parler de la sorte, le plus désespéré amateur de la pauvreté qui ait peut-être été dans l'égglise."

Art contributed her aid to commemorate this solemn union. In one of the churches of Assisi may yet be seen a fresco, by Giotto, of Francis and his bride ; he placing the nuptial ring on her finger, and she crowned with light and roses, but clothed in sordid apparel, and her feet torn by the sharp stones and briars over which she is passing.

As often as the rising sun had in former days lighted up the spires of Assisi, it had summoned the hard-handed many to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows ; and the prosperous few to drive bargains, or to give them legal form ; to chant masses, or to assist at them ; to confess, or to lay up matter for confession ; to arrange their toilettes, or to sit in judgment on the dresses and characters of others ; to sleep through the sultry noon, and to while away the long soft summer nights with dice, music, scandal, or lovers' vows ; till after some few circuits through the Zodiac, the same sun looked down

* Wright's *Dante*.

on their children's children sauntering at the same listless pace, along the same flowery road, to the same inevitable bourne. But no sooner had these prolific nuptials been celebrated, than the inert mass of human existence at Assisi began to heave with unwonted agitation. In her streets and public walks and churches, might be daily encountered the presence of one, most merciless to himself, most merciful to others. His few, simple, and affectionate words, penetrated those cold and frivolous minds; for they were uttered in the soul-subduing power of a seer, whose wide horizon embraces the sublime objects visible to the eye of faith, though hidden from the grosser eye of sense.

Of the union of Francis and Poverty, Bernard de Quintavalle was the first fruits. He was a man of wealth and distinction, and had cherished some distrust of the real sanctity of his fellow-townsmen. Bernard therefore brought him to his house, laid himself down to rest in the same chamber, and pretended to sleep while he watched the proceedings of his guest. He saw him rise and kneel, extend his arms, weep tears of rapture, and gaze towards heaven, exclaiming repeatedly, "My God, and my all!" At this sight all doubts were dissipated. "Tell me," said Bernard to his friend, when they met shortly afterwards, "if a slave should receive from his master a treasure which he finds to be useless to him, what ought he to do with it?" "Let him restore it," said Francis, "to his master." "Lo then," replied Bernard, "I render back to God the earthly goods with which He has enriched me." "We will go together to church," rejoined the spouse of Poverty, "and, after hearing mass, we will ascertain His will." In their way thither they were joined by Peter of Catania, who, though a canon of the cathedral church of Assisi, was another aspirant after the same sublime self-sacrifice.

The three knelt together before the altar; and when the mass had been sung, the officiating priest, at their request, made the sign of the cross over the missal, and then devoutly opened it. Once on behalf of each of them were these *sortes sanctorum* tried. We are the humble transcribers, not the sponsors of the marvels which followed. To the first inquiry, the response of the oracle was, "If ye will be perfect, go and sell all that ye have." To the second it answered, "Take nothing for your journey." To the third and last was returned the admonition, "He that would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." "Ye have heard, my brethren," exclaimed Francis, "what must be our rule of life, and the rule of all who shall join us. Let us obey the Divine command." It was obeyed implicitly. Bernard and Peter sold all they had, and gave it to the poor; and, having stripped them-

selves of all temporal wealth as absolutely as their leader, they assumed his austere dress, and avowed themselves his disciples.

A great event had happened in an unconscious world. Though but three had thus met together, yet the order of Minorites or Franciscan brethren was constituted. Six centuries have since passed away; and it still flourishes, one of the elements of life, if not of progress, in the great Christian commonwealth.

The grain of mustard-seed soon began to germinate. Francis, Bernard, and Peter, retired together to a hut in the centre of the plain of Rivo Torto; so called from a serpentine stream which wanders through it. With what authority the founder ruled even these, his first followers, may be inferred from the fact (attested by the usual evidence), that after the death of Peter, such prodigies of healing were wrought at his tomb, as much disturbed the devout retirement of his surviving friends. "Brother Peter, you always obeyed me implicitly when you were alive," at length exclaimed the much-perplexed Francis—"I expect from you a similar submission now. The visitors to your tomb annoy us sadly. In the name of holy obedience I command you to work no more miracles." Peter at once dutifully desisted from his posthumous works of mercy. "So obedient," observes M. Chavin de Malan, writing in this nineteenth century, "were the family of Francis even after death."

At Rivo Torto, Egidius, another rich citizen of Assisi, sought out and joined the new society. Famous for many graces, and for not a few miracles, he is especially celebrated for having received at Perugia a visit from St Louis in disguise, when the two saints long knelt together in silence, embracing each other, in such a manner as to bring their hearts into the closest possible contiguity. On the departure of the King, Egidius was rebuked by his brethren for his rudeness, in not having uttered a word to so great a sovereign. "Marvel not," he answered, "that we did not speak. A divine light laid bare to each of us the heart of the other. No words could have intelligibly expressed that language of the soul, or have imparted the same sacred consolation. So impotent is the tongue of man to utter divine mysteries."

Sabbatini, of whom we read only that he was *vir bonus et rectus*—Morico, a crusader who had been miraculously cured by the prayers of Francis—John de Capella, "who, like another Judas, hanged himself at last"—Sylvester, who, in a dream, had seen the arms of Francis extended to either end of the world, while a golden cross reached from his lips to heaven—with four other worthies, of whom history has preserved only the names, followed the steps of the mystic Egidius. In the dilapidated hut of Rivo Torto, twelve

poor men had now assembled. To a common observer they might have passed for the beggar king and his tattered crew. To the leader himself they appeared, more justly, an image of the brotherhood of which the patriarchal family had been the type, and the apostolic college the antitype.

The morning had dawned over the hills from which the river Torto flows, and long had been the prayer of Francis, when, rising from his knees, he called his brethren round him, and thus addressed them: "Take courage, and shelter yourselves in God. Be not depressed to think how few we are. Be not alarmed either at your own weakness, or at mine. God has revealed to me that He will diffuse through the earth this our little family, of which He is himself the Father. I would have concealed what I have seen, but love constrains me to impart it to you. I have seen a great multitude coming to us, to wear our dress, to live as we do. I have seen all the roads crowded with men travelling in eager haste towards us. The French are coming. The Spaniards are hastening. The English and the Germans are running. All nations are mingling together. I hear the tread of the numbers who go and come to execute the commands of holy obedience."—"We seem contemptible and insane. But fear not. Believe that our Saviour, who has overcome the world, will speak effectually in us. If gold should lie in our way, let us value it as the dust beneath our feet. We will not, however, condemn or despise the rich who live softly, and are arrayed sumptuously. God, who is our master, is theirs also. But go and preach repentance for the remission of sins. Faithful men, gentle, and full of charity, will receive you and your words with joy. Proud and impious men will condemn and oppose you. Settle it in your hearts to endure all things with meekness and patience. The wise and the noble will soon join themselves to you, and, with you, will preach to kings, to princes, and to nations. Be patient in tribulation, fervent in prayer, fearless in labour, and the kingdom of God, which endures for ever, shall be your reward."

Such, we are assured by his "Three Companions," was the inaugural discourse of Francis to his first disciples. Then drawing on the earth on which he stood a figure of the cross, each limb of which was turned to one of the four cardinal points of the compass, and arranging his brethren in the four corresponding lines, he dismissed each of them with the solemn benediction—"Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall nourish thee." The new missionaries departed to their work of mercy, and Francis himself retired to the solitude of the hut of Rivo Torto.

In that retirement an arduous duty awaited him. He drew up there, in twenty-three chapters, the rule of his new monastic order, the "Magna Charta of Poverty." It did not essentially differ from the similar institutes of the Benedictines. To the vows of chastity and obedience, was however to be added a vow of Poverty yet more stringent than theirs. His brethren were to labour with their hands, and were to be maintained by alms. But they were to solicit alms, not as suitors for a gratuitous favour, but as asserters of a positive right, which Christ himself had bestowed on the poor. A code of higher authority than any human laws, had imposed on the rich the office, and the obligations, of stewards for such as had need of sustenance. The indigent were the real proprietors of all earthly treasures. The food on which Dives fared sumptuously, belonged of right to Lazarus; and Dives could acquire an equal title to be fed, only by lying, in his turn, a beggar at the gate.

A doctrine always so welcome to the great body of mankind, could never have been announced with a surer prospect of a wide and cordial acceptance, by the people at large, than in the commencement of the thirteenth century. But the establishment in the church of a polity thus democratic, seemed no easy enterprise. He who wore the Triple Crown, could, it seemed, be scarcely expected to permit the creation of a new monastic institute on principles so menacing to all sovereigns, whether secular or spiritual. Yet without that permission, the founder might become an heresiarch as guilty as Peter Waldo, and his followers obnoxious to punishments as terrible as those of the Albigenses. It was in the summer of the year 1210 that Francis, accompanied by two or three of his disciples, made a pilgrimage to Rome, to obtain, if possible, from the formidable potentate, who then bore the keys and the sword of Peter, a sanction for these startling novelties.

The splendid palace of the Lateran reflected the rays of the evening sun as the wayworn travellers approached it. A group of churchmen in sumptuous apparel were traversing with slow and measured steps its lofty terrace, then called "the Mirror," as if afraid to overtake him who preceded them, in a dress studiously simple, and with a countenance wrapt in earnest meditation. Unruffled by passion, and yet elate with conscious power, that eagle eye, and those capacious brows, announced him the lord of a dominion which might have satisfied at once the pride of Diogenes, and the ambition of Alexander. Since the Tugurium was built on the Capitoline, no greater monarch had ever called the seven hills his own. But, in his Pontificate, no æra had occurred more

arduous than that in which Innocent the Third saw the mendicants of Assisi prostrate themselves at his feet.

Twelve years had elapsed since his elevation to the Pontifical throne. In that period he had converted into realities the most audacious visions of Hildebrand. He had exacted the oath of fealty to himself from all the Imperial officers of the city. He had seized on the marches of Ancona and Umbria. He had annulled the election of Frederick, the infant son of the deceased Emperor; and, as Vicar of Christ on earth, had substituted for him the young Otho of Brunswick; whom he afterwards excommunicated. He had laid France under an interdict to punish the divorce of Philip Augustus. He had given away the crowns of Bohemia and Bulgaria. He had received homage from John for the crown of England; and, availing himself of Count Baldwin's capture of Constantinople, he had become the arbiter of the fortunes of the Eastern Empire. So far all had been triumphant. But dark clouds had now arisen, which may well be supposed to have shaped and coloured the evening reverie of this great conqueror; when it was interrupted by the sudden appearance of Francis and his companions.

The interruption was as unwelcome as it was abrupt. As he gazed at the squalid dress and faces of his strange suitors, and observed their bare and unwashed feet, his lip curled with disdain, and, sternly commanding them to withdraw, he seemed again to retire from the outer world into some of the deep recesses of that capacious mind. Francis and his companions betook themselves to prayer; Innocent to his couch. There (says the legend) he dreamed that a palm tree sprouted up from the ground between his feet, and, swiftly shooting up into the heavens, cast her boughs on every side, a shelter from the heat, and a refreshment to the weary. The vision of the night (so proceeds the tale) dictated the policy of the morning, and assured Innocent that, under his fostering care, the Franciscan palm would strike deep her roots, and expand her foliage on every side, in the vineyard of the Church.

Never, however, was there a time when the councils of Rome were less really under the influence of narcotics of any kind. It must have been in the vigils, not in the slumbers, of the night, that the Pontiff revolved the incidents of the preceding evening, and perceived their full significance. Yet why deliberate at all when it is impossible to err? Infallibility should advance to truth by one free intuitive bound, not hobbling on the crutches of inquiry and inference. It is among the mysteries which we are bound to revere in silence, that, whether in solitude or in synods, the inspired

wisdom of Rome has always groped its way by the aid of human reasonings. No record remains of those which now governed the resolves of Innocent ; but an obvious conjecture may supply them.

The great traditional maxim of the Papal dynasty has ever been, to direct the tendencies of each succeeding age, by grasping and controlling those springs of action from which the spirit of each successively derives its mould, and form, and fashion. From every province of his spiritual empire, tidings had recently reached the Pontiff of the appearance and rapid diffusion of a spirit, full of menace to all thrones, and urgently demanding subjugation. It might be called the fraternising spirit. It manifested itself in the creation of brotherhoods as barriers against despotism, both feudal and ecclesiastical. In all the chief cities of Europe, the merchants, citizens, and workmen, were forming themselves into guilds, and electing their own syndics and magistrates. Already might be discerned the active germs of the great commercial commonwealths of Florence, Pisa, and Genoa ; of Frankfort, Ghent, and Bruges ; of Hamburg, Lubeck, and Bremen ; and those of the no less great commercial corporations of London, Bristol, and Norwich. Still more numerous were the religious associations which, in one vast, though incoherent, alliance, opposed the pride and luxury of their spiritual lords. From the Guadalquiver to the Elbe—from the Thames to the Tiber—swarms of such socialists practised, or seemed to practise, extreme austerities, and inculcated doctrines abhorred of the orthodox and the faithful. Obscurely distinguished from each other as Patarins, Cathari, Bons-Hommes, Poor men of Lyons, Josephins, Flagellants, Publicani, and Waldenses, or grouped together under the general term of Albigenses, they rejected the sacraments of marriage and penance, and disbelieved the magical influence of baptism and the eucharist. They denied the lawfulness of oaths and of capital punishments. They maintained that no Divine ordinance was valid if administered by a priest in mortal sin. They taught that the successors of the Apostles were bound to succeed to the apostolic poverty ; and, since none so well fulfilled that hereditary obligation as themselves, they thought that none were equally well entitled to discharge the apostolic office.

To refute these errors, Rome had employed her most irrefragable arguments : the bitter curses of Lucius ; the cruelties, beyond conception horrible, of Innocent. The brand, the scourge, and the sword, had fallen from the wearied hands of the ministers of his vengeance. Hundreds were cast alive into the furnace, and not a few plunged into the flames with exulting declarations of the faith for which they perished. The Vicar of Christ bathed the banner

of the cross in a carnage, from which the wolves of Romulus, and the eagles of Cæsar, would have turned away with loathing. But the will of the sufferers was indomitable; and this new scourge of God was constrained to feel, that, from conquests which left the immortal spirit unsubdued, he could derive no effectual security, and no enduring triumph.

Such was the menacing aspect which Christendom presented to her sacerdotal head at the moment, when, after having first repulsed, he again summoned to his presence, the mendicants of Assisi. The other monastic orders formed so many ramparts round his throne. But neither the Benedictines with their splendid endowments, nor the Carthusians with their self-immolations, nor the Cistercians in their studious solitudes, nor the Templars and Hospitallers with their sharp swords, nor the Beguines and Maturins with their half-secular pursuits, could oppose any effective weapons to the migratory gossellers, who in every land toiled, and preached, and died; at once the martyrs, and the devoted antagonists, of his power. It was, then, in no dreaming phantasy, but in open vision, that the palm-tree sprung up between his feet, as a new and a welcome shelter. The fervid speech, the resolved aspect, the lowly demeanour, the very dirt and wretchedness of those squalid vagrants, gave to that penetrating eye assurance of a devotedness which might rival and eclipse (and, perhaps, persuade) those whom Simon de Montfort had in vain attempted to exterminate. And as, in later days, Aristotelian innovations were neutralised by scholastic subtleties;—the all-emancipating press by the soul-subduing miracles of art;—the impassioned revolt of Luther by the ardent allegiance of Loyola:—so now, the ill-organised confederacy of the reformers of Western Europe might be counteracted by a zeal as impetuous as their own, but directed by the unerring sagacity of the Roman conclave, to far more systematic and effective exertions. The popular watchwords of Poverty, Continence, Lowliness, and Self-Denial, would no longer be used as so many reproaches on the Roman hierarchy, but as the war-cry of the self-mortified adherents of Rome. Her enthusiastic missionaries, commanding the sympathy of the multitude, would cause it to flow in holy indignation against the vices of the mitre and the coronet, but in pious loyalty towards the Triple Crown which had rested for a thousand years on the brows of the successors of Peter.

With such prescience, Innocent recalled into his presence the mendicant whose first overtures he had so contemptuously rejected. He now accepted them, cordially indeed, yet with characteristic caution. The laws of the proposed order of Minorites were ex-

amined, discussed, and approved. Heedless of the sinister predictions of the Sacred College, the Pope was willing to recognise, in the severity of their discipline, the perfection which Christ himself requires ; and Francis, having plighted solemn vows of obedience, and having received in turn a no less solemn apostolic blessing, departed from the Lateran with an *unwritten* approbation of his rule.

Inflamed with holy ardour for the conversion of men, and for the defence of the fortress and centre of the Catholic faith, he returned to his native city. His toilsome march was a genuine ovation. His steps were followed by admiring crowds ; church bells rang out their peels at his approach ; processions chanting solemn litanies advanced to meet him ; enraptured devotees kissed his clothes, his hands, and his feet ; proselytes of either sex, and of every rank and age, repeated the vows of poverty, continence, obedience, and labour ; and, as the words passed from mouth to mouth, other vows strangely mingled with them, devoting lands, convents, and monasteries to the use of those whose abandonment of all worldly wealth was thus enthusiastically celebrated. Superb inconsistency ! No homage, however extravagant, is refused by mankind to a will at once inflexible and triumphant ; so great is the reverence unconsciously rendered, even by the least reflecting, to the great mystery of our nature ;—the existence in man of volitions and of resolves, not absorbed in the Supreme Will, but, in some enigmatic sense, distinct from it. The simple-hearted Francis had a readier solution. “They honour God,” he exclaimed, “in the vilest of His creatures.” Whatever may have been the motive of the donors, the fact is certain, that, on his return from Rome, the spouse of Poverty received, for the use of his spiritual offering, a formal grant of the church of St Mary of Angels, or the Porzioncula, which his pious zeal had reinstated.

Among the saints of the Roman calendar few enjoy a more exalted renown than St Clare, a scion of the noble house of Ortolana. “Clara,” so runs the bull of her canonisation, “claris præclara meritis, magnæ in cœlo claritate gloriæ, ac in terrâ miraculorum sublinium, clare claret.” Even before her birth a voice from heaven had announced that her course of life was to be a brilliant one ; and, at the instance of her mother, to whom the promise had been addressed, she therefore received at the baptismal font the significant name on which, after her death, Pope Alexander the Fourth was to play this jingle. From her childhood she had justified the appellation. Beneath her costly robes, and the jewels which adorned them, she wore the penitential girdle ; and vain

were the efforts of countless suitors to win a heart already devoted to the Heavenly Bridegroom. The fame of her piety reached the ears, and touched the heart, of Francis. She admired the lustre of his sanctity. The mutual attraction was felt and acknowledged. They met, conferred, and met again. By his advice an elopement from the house of her parents was arranged, and by his assistance it was effected. They fled to the Porzioncula. Monks, chanting their matins by torch-light, received and welcomed her there; and then, attended by her spiritual guide, she took sanctuary in the neighbouring church of St Paul, until arrangements could be made for her reception in a convent. The heroine of the romance was in her nineteenth, the hero in his thirtieth, year. Yet she was not an Eloisa, but only one of those young ladies (all good angels guard them!) by whom the ether of sacerdotal eloquence cannot be safely inhaled in private. He was not an Abelard, but only one of those ghostly counsellors (all good angels avert them!) who would conduct souls to heaven, by the breach of the earliest and most sacred of the duties which He who reigns there has laid upon us. Such, indeed, was the superiority of Francis to any prejudice in favour of filial obedience and parental authority, that, despite the agony and the rage of her father, and the effort of his armed retainers, he induced her two sisters, Agnes and Beatrice, to follow her flight, and to partake of her seclusion. The shears which severed the clustering locks of Agnes, were held, we are assured, by his own consecrated hands.

So bewitching an example was, of course, fatal to many other flowing tresses, and to the serenity of the heads they covered. The church of St Damiano, which the zeal of Francis had reconstructed, became the convent of the order of poor sisters. Monks cannot cease to be men; and, in their silent cells, the hearts of the Minor brethren throbbed to learn that their cravings for woman's sympathy were thus, at least, partially satisfied. Under the guidance of the ladies of the house of Ortolana, and the legislation of their common founder, colonies of this devout sisterhood were rapidly settled in all the chief cities of Europe; and Clara, the disobedient and the devout, being elected the first abbess of the order, performed, as we are assured, miracles of self-conquest in her lifetime, and miracles of mercy in her tomb.

At the summit of his hopes, Francis surveyed the path which yet lay before him; but his spirit fainted at the prospect. Renown, influence, supremacy, had gathered round him; but his soul was oppressed with the responsibilities of trusts so weighty, and for the use of which he was wholly unprepared by any literary or theolo-

gical education. In words which he ascribes to Francis himself, St Bonaventura depicts the conflict of his mind on the grave question, whether, by a life of solitary devotion, or by a life of apostolic labours, he should best fulfil the Divine counsels. If the quotation of his language be accurate, it is evident that he inclined to the more active choice, but dreaded to oppose to the wisdom of his age, the foolishness of such preaching as his untaught mind, and unpractised tongue, could utter. If the difficulty itself is characteristic of him, the escape from it is still more so.

Sylvester, one of his associates at the Rivo Torto, still remained in the adjacent mountains, a hermit absorbed in devotion. To him, and to Clara, Francis despatched injunctions to ascertain what was the pleasure of the great Head of the Church on this momentous question. The answers of the hermit and of the abbess were the same. To each it had been revealed that the founder of their order should go forth and preach the Gospel. God, they assured him, would put words into his mouth. To receive their joint message he knelt on the earth ; his head bare and bowed down, his hands crossed over his breast. On hearing it he vaulted from the ground, crying, "Let us go forth in the name of the Lord!" At his first appearance as a preacher, we are told that burning eloquence burst from his lips, diseases fled at his touch, sinners abandoned their vices, and crowds flocked into his order. Every day witnessed the increase of the numbers and zeal of his proselytes ; until, on the 30th of May, 1216, a goodly company, constituting the first chapter of the order of the Minor brethren, had assembled at the Porzioncula.

This convention was rendered memorable in their annals by the apportionment which was then made of the Christian world into so many Franciscan missions. For himself the founder reserved the kingdom of France, as the noblest and most arduous province. Tuscany, Lombardy, Provence, Spain, and Germany were assigned to five of his principal followers. Such were now their numbers that thirty-four departed for Provence, and no less than sixty found their way to the Empire. The land of the Ghibellines, the future birth-place of Luther, formed, however, even in the thirteenth century, an exception to the welcome with which, in other parts of Europe, these new emissaries of Rome were enthusiastically received. Of the itinerants along the banks of the Rhine and the Danube, not one could make himself intelligible in the German tongue. Destitute of the ever ready resource of miracle (it is difficult to conjecture why), they could not convince a people with whom they could not communicate ; and were driven away with ridicule and outrage.

The French mission received a yet more unexpected check. To place this great undertaking under the special care of St Peter and St Paul, Francis had commenced his missionary journey by visiting their sepulchres. Rome had, at that time, received another, and not less memorable, guest, since known in the calendar of the saints by the name of Dominick. He was a Spaniard, the member of a noble house, a man of letters, and a priest. Amid the horrors of the crusade against the Albigenses, and while himself deeply stained with that blood-guiltiness, he had preached repentance, and inculcated orthodoxy. And now, a sojourner in the metropolis of Christendom, he saw in a vision Christ himself possessed with wrath against mankind (so well agreed his sleeping and his waking thoughts), and then appeared to him the Virgin mother, appeasing her son by presenting to him two men, in one of whom the dreamer saw his own image. The other was a stranger to him. When, with the return of light, he repaired to a neighbouring church to worship, that stranger appeared there in the garb of a mendicant. "My brother, my companion," exclaimed the Spaniard, "let us unite our powers, and nothing shall prevail against us;" and forthwith the founders of the Dominican and Franciscan orders were in each other's arms. They met again at the palace of the Cardinal Ugolino. He proposed to them the elevation of some of their followers to the episcopacy, and even to the Sacred College. The offer was declined by both. Another ineffectual proposal was made by Dominick himself for the union of their separate institutes; and then, with earnest professions of mutual regard, and assurances of mutual support, they parted to divide the world between them.

To secure his share of that empire, Francis, however, found it necessary to abandon his contemplated mission to France. The sagacity of Ugolino had detected the intrigues and secret machinations of the enemies of this new spiritual power; and his authority induced the founder of it to remain at Rome, to counteract them. Subtlety, the tutelary genius of his country, and his natural ally on such an occasion, abandoned Francis on this, as on so many other exigencies, to the charge of the gentler power, Somnus; who, throwing open the ivory gates, exhibited to him, first a hen, attempting in vain to gather her chickens under her wings, and then a majestic bird, gently alighting to spread her far-extended plumage over the unprotected brood. The interpretation was obvious. The Pope must be persuaded to appoint Ugolino to the office of protector of the unfledged nestlings of the Franciscan eyrie.

But Innocent was now dead; and the third Honorius, a stranger to Francis, and studiously prepossessed against him, filled the papal

throne. The cardinal proposed that the suitor for this new favour should win it by preaching in the sacred consistory; persuaded that the eloquence for which he was renowned must triumph over all opposing prejudices. Great were the throes of preparation. A sermon, composed with the utmost skill of the preacher, was engraven, with his utmost diligence, on his memory. But at the sight of that august audience, every trace of it departed from his mind, leaving him in utter confusion, and, as it seemed, in hopeless silence. A pause, a mental prayer, and one vehement self-conflict followed; and then, abandoning himself to the natural current of his own ardent emotions, he poured forth his soul, in an address so full of warmth and energy, as to extort from the Pope, and the whole college, the exclamation that it was not he that spake, but the Divinity which spoke within him. From such lips no request could be preferred in vain; and Ugolino was nominated by Honorius to the high and confidential post of Protector of the Minorite brethren.

In the month of May, 1219 (the tenth year of the Franciscan æra), the inhabitants of Assisi looked from their walls on a vast encampment surrounding the Porzioncula as a centre, and spreading over the wide plain on which the city stands. Five thousand mendicants had there met together to celebrate the second general chapter of their order. Huts of straw and mud afforded them shelter. The piety of the neighbouring towns and villages supplied them with food. Each group, or company, of sixty or a hundred, formed a distinct congregation, offering up prayers in common, or listening to discourses of which the future conquest of the world was the theme. Then, at the word, and under the guidance, of their chief, the separate bands, forming themselves into one long procession, advanced with solemn chants, or in still more solemn silence, to the city of Perugia. There Ugolino met them, and, casting off his purple mantle, his hat, and his shoes, was conducted by his exulting clients, in the dress of a Minor brother, to the place of their great assembly. "Behold," exclaimed the astonished patron, to the founder of the order, "behold the camp of God! How goodly are thy tents, O Israel, and thy dwellings, O Jacob!"

The words fell mournfully on the ear of Francis. As his eyes scanned the triumphs of that auspicious hour, sadness brooded over his soul. He felt, like other conquerors, that the laurel wreath is too surely entwined with cypress; and drew dark forebodings of decay even from the unexpected rapidity of his success. Brief, therefore, and melancholy, was his answer to the Cardinal's congratulations. "We have made," he said, "large promises; we have

received yet larger. Let us accomplish the one ; and aspire after the fulfilment of the other. These pleasures are brief. There are pains which are eternal. Our sufferings are light ; but there is a far more exceeding weight of glory. Many are called, few are chosen. To each man there shall be a recompense according to his works. Above all things, my brethren, love the holy Church, and pray for her exaltation. But cling to poverty. Is it not written, Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall nourish thee ?”

Again the heart of Ugolino throbbed as he surveyed the multitude devoted to works of mercy and of self-denial ; and he commended, while he blessed, them. Again was raised the sterner voice of their spiritual father, rebuking the soft weakness with which they had welcomed and enjoyed such unmerited praise. Pained and mortified, the Cardinal asked the motive of this ill-timed severity. “My lord, I have reprovèd them,” was the answer, “that they may not lose the lowliness you have been extolling ; and that humility may strike her roots the more deeply into their hearts.”

Unfamiliar as he was with the subtleties, scholastic or politic, of his age, Francis was a keen observer of the characters and the ways of men. He discovered that the zealous protector of his order was a still more zealous member of the Roman conclave ; and that, to attach the foremost of the Minor brethren to the cause and service of the Papacy, he had dazzled their eyes with prospects of mitres, and even of the purple. He also discovered that they had conferred with the Cardinal on their own exclusion from the government of the society, on the want both of health and of learning in their head, and on the excessive rigour and singularity of his rule. He saw in these Dathans and Abirams of his camp the rising spirit of revolt, and he proceeded at once to subdue it with his accustomed energy. The chapter of the order was in session ; when, conducting Ugolino thither, Francis addressed to them, and to him, these stern and menacing words ; “My brethren, God has commanded me, in foolishness and humility, to copy the foolishness of the cross. Let me hear of no other rule than that which He has thus established. Dread the Divine vengeance, all ye who abandon it, all ye who seduce others to backslide.” The silence which followed on this apostrophe, and on the departure of the speaker, was at length broken by the Cardinal. He exhorted the congregation to obey implicitly their apostolic founder, on whom, he declared, the Divine influence was evidently resting. Evident, at least, it had become, that the day of secular greatness could not dawn on the children of Poverty till her spouse should have ceased to govern them.

To divert their minds from such disloyal thoughts, Francis occupied them with the promulgation of rules respecting the worship of the Virgin, of Peter and of Paul, and the structure of their ecclesiastical edifices. To elicit their loyal affections, he laid before them a project for the spiritual conquest of the whole habitable globe. For himself he reserved the seat of the war between the crusaders and the Saracens. To each of his foremost disciples he assigned a separate mission; and he dismissed them with letters from the Pope, commending them to the care of all ecclesiastical dignitaries, and with a circular epistle from himself, bearing this superscription: "To all Potentates, Governors, Consuls, Judges, and Magistrates on the earth, and to all others to whom these presents shall come, brother Francis, your unworthy servant in the Lord, sendeth greeting and peace." Armed with these credentials the propagandists of Assisi dispersed; some to found monasteries in Spain, some to preach the Gospel in the Empire, some to rival the socialists of France, some to become professors at Oxford, and some to provoke martyrdom in Morocco; but never again to be convened by their "General Minister" to consult together in a deliberative chapter. It was an experiment too hazardous for repetition; a risk to be dreaded far more than any which awaited him among the warriors of the crescent, or the champions of the cross.

These were now drawn in hostile array under the walls of Damietta, and there he joined them. The confusion of the camp of Agramante was but a feeble image of that which he found in the host of the titular King of Jerusalem, John de Brienne;—cavaliers and footmen, all emulous of fame, all impatient of obedience, all insisting on being led into action, all interchanging bitter contumelies, and all willing to cut each other's throats, if no better employment could be found for their swords. Like another Micaiah, Francis foretold the disastrous results of a combat about to be waged, under the shelter of holy names, but in the wanton insolence of human passion. Like him he saw all Israel scattered like sheep upon the mountains; and like him he prophesied in vain. The mutinous troops hurried their leader into the field; and the loss of six thousand of the Christians attested the foresight of their unwarlike monitor.

In the midst of feats of arms and agonies of toils and suffering, admonition was, however, an office too humble to satisfy the desires of a soul cast in a mould so heroic as his. He was a strategist as well as a saint; and, in this day of sorrow and rebuke, found a meet occasion to exhibit the whole strength of his belligerent resources. During many successive hours, he knelt and was

absorbed in prayer. Then rising with a countenance radiant with joy and courage, he advanced towards the infidel camp; chanting as he marched, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me." A gold besant was the price of the head of a Christian. But what were such terrors to an evangelist about to close the war by the conversion of the Soldan himself? From every incident he drew fresh confidence. When he saw the flocks collected for the consumption of the Saracens, "Behold," he cried, "I send you forth as sheep among wolves." When seized by the Saracens themselves, and asked by whom, and why, he had been sent to "their lines," he answered, "I am not sent of man, but of God, to show you the way of salvation." When carried before their chief, and courteously invited to remain in his tent, "Yes," he exclaimed, "I will remain, if you and your people will become converts for the love of Jesus Christ. If you hesitate, kindle a furnace, and I and your priests will enter it together; and the result shall show you whether truth is on my side or on theirs." The most venerable of the Imauns shuddered and withdrew; and the smiling commander of the Faithful avowed his doubt whether he could find a priest to encounter the ordeal. "Only promise to become a Christian," replied Francis, "and I will enter the furnace alone; but if I should be burnt, conclude, not that my message is false, but only that it has reached you by one who, bearing it unworthily, is justly punished for his sins." Still obdurate, but still courteous, the infidel chief offered rich presents to his stout-hearted visitor; and then, with a guard of honour, and a safe-conduct, dismissed him to the Christian camp.

That the head of the missionary was neither bartered for a gold besant by the soldiers, nor amputated by the scimitar of their leader, may be explained either by the oriental reverence for supposed insanity, or by the universal reverence for self-denying courage, or by the motives which induced the lion to lie quietly down, and turn his tail on the drawn sword, and eloquent taunts, of the Knight of La Mancha. To the Eagle of Meaux, however, this adventure presents itself in a more brilliant light. "Francois," he exclaims, "indigné de se voir ainsi respecté par les ennemis de son maître, recommence ses invectives contre leur religion monstrueuse; mais, étrange et merveilleuse insensibilité! ils ne lui témoignent pas moins de déference; et le brave athlète de Jésus-Christ, voyant qu'il ne pouvait mériter qu'ils lui donnassent la mort: 'Sortons d'ici, mon frère,' disait-il à son compagnon, 'fuyons, fuyons bien loin de ces barbares, trop humains pour nous, puisque nous ne les pouvons obliger, ni à adorer notre maître, ni à nous persé-

cuter ; nous qui sommes ses serviteurs. Oh Dieu ! quand mériterons-nous le triomphe de martyr si nous ne trouvons que des honneurs, même parmi les peuples les plus infidèles ? Puisque Dieu ne nous juge pas dignes de la grâce du martyr, ni de participer à ses glorieux opprobres, allons-nous-en, mon frère ; allons achever notre vie dans le martyr de la pénitence, ou cherchons quelque endroit de la terre où nous puissions boire à longs traits l'ignominie de la croix."

Such places were readily found. In Spain, in Provence, and in Northern Italy, Francis everywhere preached to crowds hanging on his lips ; and though the ignominy of the cross may have been his theme, it must be confessed that the admiration of mankind was his habitual reward. But amidst the applauses of the world, his heart yearned after his native Umbria, where his Order had first struggled into sight, and where it was now to receive its final development.

In his missions through Europe he had discovered that his institutes of Minor brethren, and of poor sisters, bound to celibacy, to poverty, and to obedience, were erected on a basis far too narrow for the universal empire at which he aimed. Marriage was inconsistent with the first of these vows, worldly callings with the second, and secular dignities with the last. But though wives, and trades, and lordships were incompatible with "perfection," they might be reconciled with admission into a lower or third estate of his Order, where, as in the court of the Gentiles, those might worship to whom a nearer approach to the sanctuary was interdicted. With the design of thus throwing open the vestibule of the temple to the uninitiated, a supplemental code was promulgated, in the year 1221, for what was to be called "The Order of Penitence."

The members of it were to take no vows whatever. Engaging to submit themselves to certain rules of life, it was *agreed* that the breach of those rules should not involve the guilt of mortal sin. They required the restitution of all unjust gains, a reconciliation with all enemies, and obedience to the commands of God and of the Church. The members of the Order were to wear a mean and uniform dress. Their houses and furniture were to be plain and frugal, though not without consulting the proprieties of their social rank. All luxuriousness in animal delights, and all the lusts of the eye, were to be mortified ; all theatres, feasts, and worldly amusements eschewed. Their disputes were to be settled, with all possible promptitude, by compromises or by arbitrament. Every member of the Order was to make his will. They were never to take a nonjudicial oath, nor to bear arms, *except in defence of the Church, the Catholic faith, or their native land.*

The founder of such a confederacy must have had some of the higher moral instincts of a legislator. It would be difficult even now, with all the aid of history and philosophy, to devise a scheme better adapted to restrain the licentiousness, to soften the manners, and to mitigate all the oppressions of an iron age. Secular men and women were combined with ardent devotees, in one great society, under a code flexible as it addressed the one, and inexorable as it applied to the other, of those classes; and yet a code, which imposed on all the same general obligations, the same undivided allegiance, the same ultimate ends, and many of the same external badges. Christianity itself, when first promulgated, must to heathen eyes have had an aspect not wholly unlike that which originally distinguished the third estate of the Franciscan Orders; and rapid as may have been the corruption and decline of that estate, it would be mere prejudice or ignorance to deny that it sustained an important office in the general advancement of civilisation and of truth.

In the times of Francis himself and of his immediate successors, the Franciscan cord (the emblem of the restraint in which the soul of man is to hold the Beast to which it is wedded) was to be seen on countless multitudes; in the market-place, in the universities, in the tribunals, and even on the throne. In the camp it was still more frequent; for there was much latent significance in the exceptional terms by which the general prohibition of military service had been qualified for the members of the Order of Penitence. In the early part of the thirteenth century "the defence of the Church, of the Catholic faith, and of their native land," was, to Italian ears, an intelligible periphrasis for serving either under the standard of the cross against the Albigenses, or under the standard of the Guelphs against the Ghibellines; and the third estate of the Minorites formed an enthusiastic, patriotic, and religious chivalry, which the Pope could direct at pleasure against either his theological or his political antagonists.

And now it remained that Francis should receive the appropriate rewards of the services which he had rendered to Rome, to the world, and to the Church—to Rome, in surrounding her with new and energetic allies; to the world, in creating a mighty corporation formidable to baronial and to mitred tyrants; to the Church, in supplying her with a noble army of evangelists, who braved every danger, and endured every privation, to diffuse throughout Christendom such light as they themselves possessed. The debt was acknowledged and paid by each.

In the bitterness of his heart Francis was weeping over the sins

of mankind, in the shrine of St Mary of Angels, when a revelation was made to him, which, though described with ease and familiarity by a host of Catholic writers, the weaker faith, or the greater reverence, of Protestantism cannot venture to paint with the same minuteness. All that can be decorously stated is, that the Virgin mother, her attendant angels, her Divine Son, and Francis their devout worshipper, are exhibited by the narrative as interlocutors in a sort of melodramatic action ; which terminates in a promise from the Redeemer, that all who should visit that church, and confess themselves to a priest there, should receive a plenary remission from the guilt and punishment of all their sins ; “provided” (such is the singular qualification of the promise) “that this general indulgence be ratified by him whom I have authorised to bind and to loose on earth.”

On the following day, Francis was on his knees before the Pope at Perugia. “Holy Father,” he began, “some years ago I reconstructed a little church on your domain. Grant, I implore you, to all pilgrims resorting thither, a plenary indulgence, and exempt the building from the imposts usually consequent on the grant of such privileges.” “For how many years,” said the Pontiff, “do you desire the indulgence to be given?” “Give me not years,” replied the suitor, “but souls (*da mihi non annos, sed animos*), and let all who enter the church of Saint Mary of Angels in contrition, and who are there absolved by a priest, receive a full remission of their sins in this life, and in the life to come.” “A vast gift, and contrary to all custom,” observed the parsimonious dispenser of salvation. “But, Holy Father, I make the request not in my own name, but in the name of Christ, who has sent me to you.” “Then be it so,” exclaimed the Pope ; “but I limit to one day in each year the enjoyment of this advantage.” The grateful Francis rose, bowed low his head, and was retiring, when the voice of the Pope was again heard. “Simpleton, whither are you going? What evidence do you carry with you of the grant which you have been soliciting?” “Your word,” replied the single-hearted suitor. “If this indulgence be of God, let the blessed Virgin be the charter, Christ the notary, and the Angels the witnesses. I desire no other.”

The traveller who in our own day visits Assisi, finds himself surrounded by a population of about three thousand souls ; and amidst the thirty churches and monasteries which attract his eye, he distinguishes, as pre-eminent above them all, the Sagro Convento, where repose the ashes of Saint Francis. It is a building of the sixteenth century, extending over the summit of a gentle eminence at the base of the Apennines. A double row of gigantic arches, resembling two

vast aqueducts, the lower of which forms the basis of the higher, sustains a sumptuous terrace, which stands out against the evening sky, like the battlements of some impregnable fortress. The luxuriant gardens, and the rich meadows below, watered by a stream which gushes out from the adjacent mountains, encircle the now splendid church of St Mary of Angels; where may still be traced the Porzioncula in which Francis worshipped, and the crypt in which his emaciated body was committed to the dust. And there also, on each returning year, may be seen the hardy mountaineers of Umbria, and the graceful peasants of Tuscany, and the solemn processions of the Franciscan orders, and the long array of civil and ecclesiastical dignitaries, waiting till the chimes of the ancient clocks of the holy convent shall announce the advent of the day in which their sins are to be loosed on earth, and their pardon sealed in heaven.

Why demand the reasons of this, or of any other part of a religious system which presupposes the renunciation of all reason? The promise given to Francis by the Saviour, and ratified by His Vicar, was precise and definite. It insured a plenary remission of sin to all who should visit the hallowed Porzioncula with contrite hearts, and there receive priestly absolution. The promise, as interpreted by the eloquent Bourdaloue, seems equally absolute. From his sermon, "*Sur la fête de notre Dame des Anges*," we learn that indulgences granted by the Pope may, after all, turn out to be worthless; since the cause of the gift may be insufficient, or some other essential condition may have been neglected. But *in this case*, the indulgence, having been granted directly by Christ himself, must (says the great preacher) be infallible; for He must have known the extent of his own power, and must have been guided by eternal wisdom, and must be superior to all law in the free dispensation of His gifts.

Pause, nevertheless, all ye who meditate a pilgrimage to Assisi, in quest of this divine panacea! Put not your trust in Bourdaloue, but listen to the more subtle doctor of our own days, M. Chavin de Malan. From him you will learn that to all these large and free promises is attached yet another tacit condition; and that unless you renounce all sin, venial as well as mortal, unless the very desire to transgress have perished in your souls, unless your hearts be free from the slightest wish, the most transient voluntary attachment, towards any forbidden thing, you may be members of all religious orders, and join in all their pilgrimages and devotions, but the plenary indulgence shall never be yours. Pilgrims to Assisi! if such be *not* your happy state, it boots not to go thither. If such be

your condition, why roam over this barren earth to find the heaven which is yours already?

Equivocal as the benefit of the papal reward may have been, the recompense which the world rendered, by the hands of Orlando, Lord of Chiusi de Casentino, was at least substantial. At a solemn festival, at which the knight had made his profession of arms, Francis had pronounced the usual benediction on the symbols of his chivalry. Much discourse ensued on the spiritual state and prospects of this militant member of the Church, when the grateful, and not improvident, Orlando, for the good of his soul, bestowed on the founder and the companions of the order of Minor brethren, Monte del Alvernia, a tract of land amidst the highest summits of the Tuscan Apennines, now called Lavernia. It was a wild and sequestered region, covered with heath and rocks, and the primæval forest, and eminently adapted for a life of penitence. It became the favourite retreat of its new owners, and especially of their chief. Yet even in these solitudes he was not exempt from some grave inconveniences. By night, malignant demons afflicted him, dragging his defenceless body along the ground, and bruising him with cruel blows. When the sun burnt fiercely over his head, Orlando appeared with food, and with offers to erect cells and dormitories for the hermits, and to supply all their temporal wants, that they might surrender themselves wholly to prayer and meditation. But neither the enmity of the demons, nor the allurements of their unconscious ally, could seduce Francis from his fidelity to his wedded wife. In her society he wandered through the woods and caverns of Alvernia; relying for support on Him alone by whom the ravens are fed, and awakening the echoes of the mountains by his devout songs and fervent ejaculations.

It remained only that the Church, in the person of her eternal Head, should requite the services of her great reformer. The too familiar legend must be briefly told; for every one who would cherish in himself, or in others, the reverence due to the Holy and the Awful, must shrink from the approach to such a topic, and be unwilling to linger on it.

On the annual festival of Saint Michael the archangel, for the year 1224, Francis and Leoni, a member of his order, went together to worship at a church which had then been erected on Mount Alvernia. The *sortes sanctorum* were again consulted, by thrice opening the Gospels, which lay upon the altar. On each occasion the volume presented to their eyes the history of the passion; and the coincidence was accepted by Francis as ominous of some great event which was about to happen to himself.

The hour arrived of the "holy sacrifice;" when, as though to symbolize his disgust for earth, and his aspirations to heaven, the body of the saint slowly ascended heavenwards. When it had reached the ordinary height of a man, the feet were embraced and bathed with tears by Leoni, who stood beneath. Gradually it mounted beyond the range of human vision; but even then his voice was heard in discourse with the Invisible, and a bright radiance attested the presence of the Redeemer. He was made manifest to the eye of his enraptured worshipper, in the form of a seraph moving on rapid wings, though fastened to a cross; and when the whole scene passed away, it was found that, by radiations from this celestial figure, the body of Francis, like wax beneath the pressure of a seal, had acquired the sacred stigmata—that is, on either hand, and on either foot, marks exactly corresponding with the two opposite extremities of a rude iron nail; and on the side, a wound such as might have been inflicted by a spear.

This stupendous event happened on the 17th September, a day still consecrated by the Church to the perpetual commemoration of it. No Christian, therefore, may doubt it; for St Thomas, and all other theologians, assure us, that to doubt a "canonical fact" is rash, scandalous, and open to the just suspicion of heresy. Yet scepticism on the subject appears to have been of very early growth. Within thirteen years from the date of the occurrence, a Dominican preacher at Oppaw in Moravia, and the Bishop of Olmutz, had both published their utter disbelief of the whole story, and had condemned the propagation of it as sinful. For this audacious presumption, however, Ugolino, who then filled the papal throne under the title of Gregory the Ninth, addressed to both of them reproachful letters, which sufficiently attest his own faith in the prodigy. In the dense cloud of corroborative witnesses may be distinguished his successor, Pope Alexander the Fourth; who, in a still extant bull, denounces the severest penalties on all gainsayers. Indeed, if Saint Bonaventura may be believed, Alexander went further still, and was used to declare that he had with his own eyes seen and admired the stigmata. And M. Chavin de Malan is ready to abandon his reliance on all human testimony, if any one can convince him of the insufficiency of that on which his faith in this miracle reposes.

When the fishermen of Jordan shall have learnt how to stay her swellings with their nets, it will be time to encounter the soaring enthusiasm of M. Chavin de Malan by the cobwebs of human logic. When geometricians shall have ascertained the colour of the circle, we may hope to arrive at an understanding with him as to the meaning of the terms in which he disputes. When critics shall have

demonstrated, from the odes of Pindar, the polarization of Light, he and we may be of one mind as to the laws by which our belief should be governed. Meanwhile, his rebukes for the hardness of our hearts shall not be repelled by any imputations touching the softness of his head. He and his fellow-worshippers regard it as eminently probable, that He by whom this universal frame of things has been created and sustained, should descend to this earth, to act so strange a part as they assign to Him in so grotesque a drama as that of Mount Alvernia. If we could adopt the same opinion, we might, with them, give some heed even to the scanty, and most suspicious, evidence on which these marvels rest. One prodigy, indeed, connected with this tale, we receive with implicit conviction and profound astonishment. It is, that in the city in which Louis Philippe was then reigning, in which Guizot and Thierry were writing, and in which Cousin was delivering his lectures, there arose two learned historians, who, with impassioned eloquence, and unhesitating faith, reproduced a legend which would have been rejected as extravagant by the novelists to whom we owe the "Arabian Nights," and as profane by the authors with whom Don Quixote was familiar.

Francis did not long survive the revelation of Mount Alvernia. Exhausted by vigils, by fastings, and by fatigue, he retired to Assisi. Leoni accompanied him. As they approached the city, the increasing weakness of the saint compelled him to seek the unwonted relief of riding. But as his companion followed behind, Francis divined his thoughts. In early life they had often journeyed together over the same road ; the one ever conscious of his noble birth, the other never allowed to forget that his father was but a merchant. The contrast of the past and the present was too powerful to both of the travellers. Faint as he was, Francis dismounted from the ass which bore him : declaring that he could not retain the saddle while one so much his superior in rank was on foot.

He reached at length a hut near the convent of St Damiano, where, under the care of Clara and her poor sisters, he found a temporary repose. Twelve months of utter incapacity for exertion followed. They were passed in the monastery of St Mary of Angels. The autumn brought with it some brief intermission of his sufferings ; and again his voice was heard throughout Umbria, preaching, as his custom was, in words few, simple, and pathetic ; and when unable to teach by words, he presented himself, and gazed with earnest tenderness on the crowds who thronged to receive his benediction and to touch his garments.

In this his last mission, a woman of Bagnarea brought to him her

infant to be healed. Francis laid his hands on the child, who recovered; and who afterwards, under the name of Bonaventura, became his biographer, the general minister of his Order, a cardinal, a theologian, and a saint.

At the approach of death, Francis felt and acknowledged the horror common to all men, and especially to men of irritable nerves and delicate organization. But such feelings promptly yielded to his habitual affiance in the Divine love, and to his no less habitual affection for all in whom he recognized the regenerate image of the Divine nature. Among these was the Lady Jacoba di Settesoli; and to her he dictated a letter, requesting her immediate presence with a winding-sheet for his body, and tapers for his funeral, and with the cakes she had been used to give him during his illness at Rome. Then pausing, he bade his amanuensis tear the letter, expressing his conviction that Jacoba was at hand. She appeared; and so deep was her emotion as to have suggested to the bystanders (to whom apparently her existence had till then been unknown) the vague and oppressive sense of some awful mystery. It may, however, be reasonably supposed that the anguish of Jacoba was nothing else than the natural expression of that intense and perfect sympathy to which the difference of sex is essential, to which none but the pure in heart can ever attain, and which, with no failure of respect to so great a man, may therefore be supposed to have glowed in his bosom as warmly as in hers.

Her cakes were again eaten by the sick man; but without any abatement of his malady. Elia, who, during his illness, had acted as general minister of his Order, and Bernard de Quintavalle, his first proselyte, were kneeling before him. To each of them he gave a part of one of the cakes of Jacoba; and then crossing his arms so as to bring his right hand over the head of Bernard (whose humility had chosen the left or inferior position), he solemnly blessed them both, and bequeathed to Bernard the government of the whole Franciscan society. He then dictated his last will, in which the rules he had already promulgated were explained and enforced, and his followers were solemnly commended to the guidance and the blessing of the Most High.

His last labour done, he was laid, in obedience to his own command, on the bare ground. The evening, we are told, was calm, balmy, and peaceful; the western sky glowing with the mild and transparent radiance which follows the setting of an autumnal sun behind the lofty hills of central Italy. At that moment the requiem for the dying ceased, as the faltering voice of Francis was heard, in the language of David, exclaiming, "*Voce meâ ad Dominum cla-*

mavi!" His attendants bent over him as he pursued the divine song, and caught his last breath as he uttered, "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may give thanks unto Thy name."

Some there are, total strangers to man's interior life, who find for themselves in the objects of concupiscence a living tomb; these are the sensual and the worldly. Some, for whom the world within is detached from the world without them by hard, sharp, clear lines of demarcation; these are the men of practical ability. Some, who, from every idol of the theatre, fashion to themselves some idol of the cavern; these are the votaries of poetry or art. Some, to whom all substantial things are permanently eclipsed by the imagery of the brain; these are the insane. And some, to whom every cherished idea of their minds gives assurance of a corresponding objective reality; these are the mystics and enthusiasts—men of an amphibious existence—inhabitants alternately of the world of shadows, and of the world of solidities—their dreams passing into action, their activity subsiding into dreams—a by-word to the sensual and the worldly, an enigma to the practical, a study to the poet, and not rarely ending as fellow-prisoners with the insane.

To this small section of the human family belonged Francis of Assisi; a mere self-contradiction to those who beheld him incuriously; in one aspect a playful child, in the next a gloomy Anchorite; an arch smile of drollery stealing at times across features habitually sacred to sorrow and devotion; passing from dark forebodings into more than human ecstasies; a passionate lover of nature, yet living by choice in crowds and cities; at once an erotic worshipper, and a proficient in the practical business of the religious state; outstripping in his transcendental raptures the pursuit of criticism and conjecture, and yet drawing up codes and canons with all the precision of a notary.

The reconciliation of all this was not, however, hard to find. Francis was an absolute prodigy of faith; and especially of faith in himself. Whatever he saw in the *camera lucida* of his own mind, he received implicitly as the genuine reflection of some external reality. Every metaphor with which he dallied, became to him an actual personage, to be loved or to be hated. It was scarcely as a fiction that he wooed Poverty as his wife. Each living thing was a brother or a sister to him, in a sense which almost ceased to be figurative. To all inanimate beings he ascribed a personality and a sentient nature, in something more than a sport of fancy. At every step of his progress, celestial visitants hovered round him; announcing their presences sometimes in visible forms, sometimes in audible

voices. The Virgin mother was the lady of his heart ; her attendant angels but so many knights companions in his spiritual chivalry ; the Church a bride in glorious apparel ; and her celestial Spouse the object of a passion which acknowledged no restraint either in the vehemence of spirit with which it was cherished, or in the fondness of the language in which it was expressed. It was inevitable that the inhabitant of such a world as this, should have manifested himself to the vulgar denizens of earth in ceaseless contrasts and seeming incongruities ; so essential were the differences between the ever-varying impulses on which *he* soared, and the unvarying motives in the strength of which *they* plodded.

Though Bonaventura was but a child at the death of Francis, he possessed and diligently used the means of studying his character, and has laboured in the following passage, with more earnestness than perspicuity, to depict his interior life :—

“Who can form a conception of the fervour and the love of Francis, the friend of Christ? you would have said that he was burnt up by divine love, like charcoal in the flames. As often as his thoughts were directed to that subject, he was excited as if the chords of his soul had been touched by the plectrum of an inward voice. But as all lower affections elevated him to this love of the supreme, he yielded himself to the admiration of every creature which God has formed ; and from the summit of this observatory of delights he watched the causes of all things, as they unfolded themselves to him under living forms. Among the beautiful objects of nature, he selected the most lovely ; and, in the forms of created things, he sought out, with ardour, whatever appeared especially captivating ; rising from one beauty to another as by a ladder, with which he scaled to the highest and the most glorious.”

Birds, insects, plants, and fishes, are variously regarded, according to the temper of the observer, in a culinary, a scientific, a picturesque, or a poetical point of view. To Francis of Assisi they were friends, kinsmen, and even congregations. Doves were his especial favourites. He gathered them into his convents, laid them in his bosom, taught them to eat out of his hand, and pleased himself with talking of them as so many chaste and faithful brethren of the Order. In the lark which sprung up before his feet, he saw a Minorite sister, clad in the Franciscan colour ; who, like a true Franciscan, despised the earth, and soared towards heaven with thanksgivings for her simple diet. When a nest of those birds fought for the food he brought them, he not only rebuked their inhumanity, but prophesied their punishment. His own voice rose with that of the nightingale in rural vespers ; and at the close of their joint thanksgivings, he

praised, and fed, and blessed his fellow-worshipper. "My dear sisters," he exclaimed to some starlings who chattered round him as he preached, "you have talked long enough, it is my turn now; listen to the word of your Creator, and be quiet." The very sermon addressed by the saint to such an audience, yet lives in the pages of his great biographer. "My little brothers," it began, "you should love and praise the Author of your being, who has clothed you with plumage, and given you wings with which to fly where you will. You were the first created of all animals. He preserved your race in the ark. He has given the pure atmosphere for your dwelling-place. You sow not, neither do you reap. Without any care of your own, He gives you lofty trees to build your nests in, and watches over your young. Therefore give praise to your bountiful Creator."

The well-known instinct by which irrational animals discover and attach themselves to their rational friends, was exhibited whenever Francis came abroad. The wild falcon wheeled and fluttered round him. The leveret sought rather to attract than to escape his notice. The half-frozen bees crawled to him in winter time to be fed. A lamb followed him even into the city of Rome; and was playfully cherished there by Jacoba di Settesoli under the name of a Minor brother.

These natural incidents became, in the hands of his monkish biographers, so many miracles fit only for the nursery. Let us, not, however, upbraid them. Without apology, as without doubt, M. Chavin de Malan, in the year 1845, and from the city of Paris, informs us, that when Francis addressed his feathered congregation they stretched out their necks to imbibe his precepts;—that, at his bidding, the starlings ceased to chatter while he preached that in fulfilment of his predictions, the naughty larks died miserably;—that a falcon announced to him in the mountains the hour of prayer, though with gentler voice and a tardier summons, when the saint was sick;—that Jacoba was aroused to her devotions by her lamb with severe punctuality;—that an ovicidal wolf, being rebuked by this ecclesiastical Orpheus for his carnivorous deeds, placed his paw in the hand of his monitor in pledge of his future good behaviour, and, like a wolf of honour, never more indulged himself in mutton. Yet M. Chavin de Malan is writing a learned and an eloquent history of the monastic orders. Such be thy gods, O Oxford!

In common with all the great Thaumaturgists of the Church of Rome, Francis had abstained from recording his own prodigies. He was too honest and too lowly. No man could less be, to him-

self, the centre of his own thoughts. One central object occupied them all. He was a *Pan-Christian*. He saw the outer world not merely thronged with emblems, but instinct with the presence, of the Redeemer. The lamb he fondled was the Paschal sacrifice. The worm he guarded from injury was, "the worm, and no man, the outcast of the people." The very stones (on which he never trod irreverently) were "the chief corner-stone" of the prophet. The flowers were the "blossoms of the stem of Jesse, the perfume of which gladdens the whole earth." The ox and the ass were his guests at a Christmas festival, which he gave in the forest not long before his death; and while they steadily ate the corn provided for them, processions of Minor brethren, and crowds of admiring spectators, listened to his discourses on the manger and the babe of Bethlehem, or joined with him in sacred carols on the nativity.

Among the *Opuscula Sancti Francisci* are four poems, in which the same mystic spirit expands itself gloriously. It must not, indeed, be concealed that the authenticity of these canticles has been enveloped by the critics in a chilling cloud of scepticism. The controversy is not without its interest, but could be made intelligible within no narrow limits. Suffice it then to say, that both Tiraboschi and Ginguenè acknowledge, without hesitation, the poetical claims of the saint; and that M. Delécluse, after reviewing all the evidence with judicial impartiality and acumen, concludes that the general sense, and many of the particular expressions, are his, though, in the lapse of so many ages, the style must have drifted far away from the original structure, into a form at once more modern and more ornate. In this qualified sense the following "*Canticum Solis*" may be safely read as the work of the founder of the Franciscan order:

"Altissimo onnipotente bon' Signore, tue son le laude, la gloria, lo honore, e ogni benedictione. A te solo se confanno, e nullo homo è degno de nominarti.

"Laudato sia Dio mio Signore con tutte le creature, specialmente messer lo Fratre Sole, il quale giorna e illumina noi per lui. E ello è bello e radiante con grande splendore; de te, Signore, porta significazione.

"Laudato sia mio Signore, per Suora Luna e per le stelle; il quale in cielo le hai formate chiare e belle.

"Laudato sia mio Signore per Fratre Vento e per l' Aire e Nuvole e sereno e ogni tempo, per le quale dai a tutte creature sustentamento.

"Laudato sia mio Signore per Suora Acqua, la quale è molto utile, e humile, e pretiosa, e casta,

"Laudato sia mio Signore per Fratre Fuocho, per lo quale tu allumini la notte; e ello è bello, e jocondo, e robustissimo, e forte.

"Laudato sia mio Signore per nostra Madre Terra, la quale ne sustenta, governa e produce diversi frutti, e coloriti fiori, e herbe.

"Laudato sia mio Signore per quelli che perdonano per lo tue amore, e soste-

nenno infirmitade e tribulatione. Beati quelli che sostegneranno in pace, che de te Altissimo, seranno incoronati."

Another stanza was added in his last illness, giving thanks for "our sister, the Death of the body," the last of this strange catalogue of his kindred. Protestant reserve and English gravity alike forbid any quotations of the canticles which follow. They belong to that kind of anacreontic psalmody, in which Cupid prompts the worship of Psyche. Such a combination of the language of Paphos with the chaste fervours of the sanctuary, can never be rendered tolerable to those who have been familiar from their childhood with the majestic composure of the Anglican liturgy, or with the solemn effusions of our Scottish church, even though it be recommended to them by the pathos of Thomas à Kempis, or by the tenderness of Fénelon.

Whoever shall undertake a collection of the facetiæ of Francis, may console himself under the inevitable result, by remembering that he has failed only where Cicero and Bacon had failed before him. In the tragi-comedy of life, the saint, in common with all other great men, occasionally assumed the buskin; though not so much to join in the dialogue as to keep up the by-play. His jocularities were of the kind usually distinguished as practical; and, if not eminently ludicrous, were, at least, very pregnant jests. Behold him, to the unutterable amazement of his unwashed and half-naked fraternity, strutting before them, on his return from Damietta, in a tunic of the finest texture, with a hood behind fashionably reaching to his middle, and a broad and rich frill in front usurping the function of clerical bands:—his head tossed up towards the sky—his voice loud and imperious—and his gait like that of a dancing-master. What this strange pantomime might mean could be conjectured by none but brother Elia, whose unsubdued passion for dress had been indulged during the absence of the "general minister," and who now saw himself thus villanously caricatured by the aid of his own finery. With his serge cloak, his sandals, and his cord, Francis resumed his wonted gravity; and the unlucky Exquisite was degraded on the spot from his charge as vicar-general. On the refusal, by another brother, of the obedience due to his chief, a grave was dug, the offender seated upright in it, and mould cast over him till it had covered his shoulders. "Art thou dead?" exclaimed Francis to the head, which alone remained above ground. "Completely," replied the terrified monk. "Arise, then," rejoined the saint, "go thy ways, and remember that the dead never resist any one. Let me have dead, not living followers."

These gambols, however, were as infrequent as they were uncouth.

They were but gleams of mirth, passing rapidly across a mind far more often overcast by constitutional sadness. For though Faith had reversed the natural springs of action in his mind, and revealed to him the cheat of life, and peopled his imagination with many bright and many awful forms, yet she was not attended by her usual handmaids, Peace and Hope. With a heart dead to selfish delights, and absorbed in holy and benevolent affections, he possessed neither present serenity nor anticipated joy. Cheerless and unalluring is the image of Francis of Assisi: his figure gaunt and wasted, his countenance furrowed with care, his soul hurried from one excitement to another, incapable of study, incapable of repose, forming attachments but to learn their fragility, conquering difficulties but to prove the vanity of conquest, living but to consolidate his Order of Minor brethren, and yet haunted by constant forebodings of their rapid degeneracy. Under the pressure of such solitudes and of premature disease, he indulged his natural melancholy (his only self-indulgence), and gave way to tears till his eyesight had almost wholly failed him.

To his wondering disciples, these natural results of low diet, scanty dress, and ceaseless fatigue operating on a temperament so susceptible as his, appeared as so many prodigies of grace. But the admiration was not reciprocal. He saw, and vehemently reproved their faults. Which of them should be the greatest—was debated among the Minor brethren, as once among a more illustrious fraternity; and, in imitation of Him who washed the feet of the aspiring fishermen of Galilee, Francis abdicated the government of the Order, and for awhile became himself nothing more than a Minor brother. Which of them should gather in the greatest number of female proselytes, and superintend their convents—was another competition which he watched with yet severer anxiety. He had learnt to regard his own abduction of Clara from her father's house as a sublime departure from rules which other zealots would do well to observe. "Alas!" he exclaimed, "at the moment when God forbade us wives, Satan has, I fear, given us sisters." Which of them should build the most splendid monasteries—was yet another rivalry in which he foresaw their approaching decline. "Now," he said, "it is who shall erect the finest religious edifices. The time is coming, when others of us shall build mansions fit for the great and noble of the earth. Rich and beautiful will be the dress of those architects! Well! if our brethren may but escape mortal sin, let us be satisfied." Which of them should first win the favour of ecclesiastical patrons—was an inquiry which their protector, Ugolino, had suggested; but their rising ambition was energetically

denounced, by their prophet Francis, in fervent and prophetic warnings, which may be read among his yet extant predictions.

Saints and Satirists, of a day but little remote from his own, emulate each other in recording the accomplishment of these dark forebodings. At the distance of only thirty years from the death of the founder, we find Bonaventura, the greatest of his successors in the government of the Order, thus addressing his provincial ministers :—"The indolence of our brethren is laying open the path to every vice. They are immersed in carnal repose. They roam up and down everywhere, burthening every place to which they come. So importunate are their demands, and such their rapacity, that it has become no less terrible to fall in with them than with so many robbers. So sumptuous is the structure of their magnificent buildings as to bring us all into discredit. So frequently are they involved in those culpable intimacies which our rule prohibits, that suspicion, scandal, and reproach have been excited against us." Listen again to the ardent admirer of Francis in the 22nd book of the *Paradiso* :—

So soft is flesh of mortals, that on earth
 A good beginning doth no longer last
 Than while an oak may bring its fruit to birth.
 Peter began his convent without gold
 Or silver,—I built mine by prayer and fast ;—
 Humility for Francis won a fold.
 If thou reflect how each began, then view
 To what an end doth such beginning lead,
 Thou'lt see the white assume the darkest hue.
 Jordan driven backward, and the sea, that fled
 At God's command, were miracles indeed
 Greater than those here needful.—*Wright's Dante.*

The Franciscan Order has, however, not only survived the denunciations of Bonaventura and of Dante—the banter of Erasmus—the broader scoffs of "The Letters of some Obscure Men"—the invectives of Wicliff and Luther—the taunts of Milton—the contemptuous equity of Bayle—and the eloquence, the wit, the scorn, and the resentment of half the pens of Europe ; but has outlived the egregious crimes and follies of its own degenerate sons ; and after six centuries still lives and flourishes ; a boast of the Papal and a problem for the Protestant world. What is the principle of this protracted vitality ? Whence the buoyancy, which, amidst so many storms and wrecks, has so long sustained the institute of the unlearned, half-crazy fugitive from the counting-house at Assisi ?

Not even the idolaters of his name ascribe to him any profound foresight, or intuitive genius, or bold originality of thought. The eloquence for which he was renowned was no ignited logic, but a

burst of contagious emotion, guided by no art, fed by no stores of knowledge, and directed by no intellectual prowess. It was the voice of a herald still repeating the same impressive tidings, not the address of an orator subjugating at once the rational and the sensitive faculties of his audience. He was rather the compiler than the inventor of the Franciscan code ; and, as a legislator, is famous for only two novelties—the vow of absolute poverty, which was made but to be broken ; and the reconciliation of the religious with the secular state in his Order of Penitence, which died away with the feudal oppressions and the social exigencies which, at first, sustained and nourished it.

If considered only as a part of the general system of Monasticism, the success of the Franciscan rule is, however, readily explicable. Men become monks and women nuns, sometimes from vulgar motives ; such as fashion, the desire of mutual support, the want of a maintenance, inaptitude for more active duties, satiety of the pleasures of life, or disgust at its disappointments, parental authority, family convenience, or the like ;—sometimes from superstitious fancies ; such as the supposed sanctity of certain relics, or the expiatory value of some particular ceremonial ;—sometimes from nobler impulses ; such as the conviction that such solitude is essential to the purity of the soul of the recluse, or to the usefulness of his life ;—but always, in some degree, from other causes of still deeper root and far wider expansion. Such are, the servile spirit, which desires to abdicate the burden of free will and the responsibilities of free agency ;—and the feeble spirit, which can stand erect, and make progress, only when sustained by the pressure and the impulse of a crowd ;—and the wavering spirit, which takes refuge from the pains of doubt in the contagion of monastic unanimity.

Neither is the success of the Franciscan institute, if viewed as distinct from all other conventual orders, involved in any real obscurity. So reiterated, indeed, and so just have been the assaults on the Mendicant Friars, that we usually forget that, till the days of Martin Luther, the Church had never seen so great and effectual a reform as theirs. During nearly two centuries, Francis and his spiritual descendants, chiefly, if not exclusively, directed the two great engines of the Christian warfare—the Mission and the Pulpit. Nothing in the histories of Wesley or of Whitfield can be compared with the enthusiasm which everywhere welcomed them, or with the immediate and visible results of their labours. In an age of oligarchical tyranny they were the protectors of the weak ; in an age of ignorance the instructors of mankind ; and in an age of profligacy the stern vindicators of the holiness of the sacerdotal character, and

the virtues of domestic life. While other religious societies withdrew from the world, they entered, studied, and traversed it. They were followed by the wretched, the illiterate, and the obscure, through whom, from the first, the Church has been chiefly replenished ; but not by them only. In every part of Europe, the rich, the powerful, and the learned were found among their proselytes. In our own land Duns Scotus, Alexander Hales, Robert Grosstête, and Roger Bacon, lent to this new Christian confederacy the lustre and the authority of their names. And even when, by the natural descent of corruption, it had fallen into well-deserved contumely, still the Mission and the Pulpit, and the tradition of the great men by whom it was originally organised and nurtured, were sufficient to arrest the progress of decay, and to redeem for the Franciscan Order a permanent and a conspicuous station among the "Princedom, Dominations, Powers," which hold their appointed rank, and perform their appropriate offices, in the great spiritual dynasty of Rome.

The tragedy of Hamlet, leaving out the character of the Prince of Denmark, the biography of Turenne, with the exception of his wars, may, perhaps, be but inadequate images of a life of St Francis, omitting all notice of the doctrines he taught, and excluding any account of the influence of his theology on himself or his contemporaries, and on the generations which have succeeded him. This, however, is not a biography, but a rapid sketch put forth by secular men to secular readers. It would be indecorous to suppose that our profound divines, Scottish or English, would waste the midnight oil over so slight an attempt to revive the memory of a once famous Father of the Church, now fallen into unmerited neglect and indiscriminate opprobrium among us. Yet if, indeed, any student of Jewell or of Knox should so far descend from his Bodleian eminences as to cast a hasty glance over these lines, let him, if he will, first heartily censure, and then supply, their too palpable omissions. Let him write the complete story of St Francis, and estimate impartially his acts, his opinions, his character, and his labours ; and he will have written one important chapter of a History of the Monastic Orders, and will have contributed to supply one great deficiency in the ecclesiastical literature of the Protestant world.

THE FOUNDERS OF JESUITISM.

ON the dawn of the day on which, in the year 1534, the Church of Rome celebrated the feast of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady, a little company of men emerged in solemn procession from the deep shadows cast by the towers of Notre Dame over the silent city below them. In a silence not less profound, except when broken by the chant of the matins appropriate to that sacred season, they climbed the Hill of Martyrs, and descended into the Crypt which then ascertained the spot where the Apostle of France had won the crown of martyrdom. With a stately though halting gait, as one accustomed to military command, marched at their head a man of swarthy complexion, bald-headed, and of middle stature, who had passed the meridian of life ; his deep-set eyes glowing, as with a perennial fire, from beneath brows which, had phrenology then been born, she might have portrayed in her loftiest style, but which, even without her aid, announced to every observer a commission from on high to subjugate and to rule mankind. So majestic, indeed, was the aspect of Ignatius Loyola, that, during the sixteenth century, few, if any, of the books of his Order appeared without the impress of that imperial countenance. Beside him, in the chapel of St Denys, knelt another worshipper ; whose manly bearing, buoyant step, clear blue eye, and finely chiselled features, contrasted strangely with the solemnities in which he was engaged. Then in early manhood, Francis Xavier united in his person the dignity befitting his birth as a grandee of Spain, and the grace which should adorn a page of the Queen of Castile and Arragon. Not less incongruous with the scene in which they bore their parts, were the slight forms of the boy Alphonso Salmeron, and of his bosom friend Iago Laynez, the destined successor of Ignatius in his spiritual dynasty. With them Nicholas Alphonso Bobadilla, and Simon Rodriguez—the first a teacher, the second a student, of philosophy—prostrated themselves before the altar, where ministered Peter Faber, once a shepherd in the mountains of Savoy, but now a priest in holy orders. By his

hands was distributed to his associates the seeming bread, over which he had uttered words of more than miraculous efficacy ; and then were lifted up their united voices, uttering in low but distinct articulation, an oath, at the deep significance of which the nations might have trembled or rejoiced. Never did human lips pronounce a vow more religiously observed, or pregnant with results more momentous.

Ignatius Loyola was born in the year 1491, at Guipuscoa, in the province of Biscay. His mother, who had already borne to her husband ten children, resolved to bring forth this her youngest son in a stable, in memory of the birth-place of the Redeemer at Bethlehem. A few years later his father, a wealthy Hidalgo, introduced the boy as a page into the service of Ferdinand the Catholic, by whose command he was trained up in the graces of the court, the exercises of chivalry, the discipline of the camp, and the observances of religion. The traditions of his youth represent him as one in whom seeming contradictions met and were reconciled :—as, at the same time, a voluptuary revelling in sensual delights, and a knight of surpassing hardihood ;—as a profligate in his habits, and yet edifying his companions by his modest speech and decorous manners ;—as quickly roused to fierce anger, and as quickly subdued to gentleness and peace ;—as at once destitute of learning, and an ardent cultivator of poetry ;—as a captive in the chains of vice, while aspiring after the highest franchises of virtue ;—as habitually distracted by conflicting aims, though living under the constant dominion of one master passion—the passion for controlling the wills and directing the conduct of other men.

At the siege of Pampeluna, by the forces of Francis the First, in the year 1521, Ignatius, in scorn of the alarm which had induced the garrison to capitulate, retired with a single follower into the citadel ; and, while defending a breach in the walls, was struck down by a cannon-ball, which broke and splintered one of his legs. His gallant enemies, raising him on their arms, bore him to the tent of their general, André de Foix ; who, filled with admiration of his undaunted valour, placed him under the care of a French surgeon, and then sent him home to the adjacent castle of Loyola, with all the honours of war, and with the fracture apparently reduced. The operation had, however, been ill-performed, and the cure was imperfect ; and, to repair the error, it was thought necessary that the bone should be broken anew. The fever which followed nearly brought to a premature grave the future restorer of the Papacy.

Thus far we have trodden on ground over which no prodigy hangs ; but our path now lies through the land of miracles. While

the patient slept, the Prince of the Apostles laid his venerable hand on the limb, and at once the fever ceased, the pains passed away, and the fractured bones resumed their natural position. Yet the therapeutic skill of St Peter was less perfect than might have been expected from so exalted a surgeon. A splinter still protruded through the skin, and the wounded leg was shortened, shrunk, and disfigured. To regain his fair proportions, Ignatius submitted to tortures from which a martyr might have shrunk. The fragment of his bone was violently wrenched away, and his limb placed in a rack which, during several days, was strained to draw back the nerves, sinews, and dislocated parts into their proper places. This frightful sacrifice at the shrine of Comeliness was, however, offered in vain. Her votary was long confined to his couch, oppressed by the sad conviction that, whether the lute should breathe a summons to the gaillard, or the trumpet ring out an alarm to the battle, the sound would henceforth be but as a mockery to him. Nor (if the tale be true) was he unhaunted by the still sorer misgiving that the bright eyes of his Angelica (for our Orlando was of course also *Innamorato*) might henceforward be turned with greater favour on some Medoro of unimpeachable symmetry of form, than on himself, halting at every step on a leg misshapen, mutilated, and contracted.

Books of knight-errantry soothed these anxieties, and relieved the lassitude of sickness; and, when these tales were exhausted, the disabled soldier betook himself to a series of still more marvellous romances. In the legends of the saints he discovered a new field of emulation and of glory. When contrasted with their self-conquests and their high rewards, the achievements and the renown of Roland and of Amadis waxed dim. When compared with those peerless damsels, for whose smiles Paladins had fought and died, the awful image of feminine loveliness and angelic purity which had irradiated the hermit's cell and the path of the way-worn pilgrim, presented itself to his mental vision in a glory transcendent and unapproachable. Far as the heavens are above the earth would rise the plighted fealty of the knight of the Virgin Mother over the noblest devotion of mere human chivalry. He would cast his shield over the Church which ascribed to her more than celestial dignities, and would bathe in the blood of her enemies the sword once desecrated to the mean ends of earthly ambition.

These ardent vows were not unheeded by her to whom they were addressed. Environed in light, and clasping her infant to her bosom, she revealed herself to the adoring gaze of her champion. At that heavenly vision, all fantasies of worldly and sensual delight, like exorcised demons, fled from his soul into an eternal

exile. Arising from these erotic dreams, he suspended at her shrine his secular weapons, performed his nocturnal vigils, and, with returning days, retired from the chapel, to consecrate his future life to the glory of the *Virgo Deipara*.

Restored to health, the knight once more vaulted into his saddle, and, guiding his war-horse toward the altar of Our Lady of Montserrat, carioled in advance of the throng of ignobler pilgrims, who, like himself, had made a solemn vow to worship there. A Moor from Granada encountered and accosted him; but from courteous greetings the two cavaliers soon passed to fierce and thorny controversy. If they had graduated at Salamanca, they could not have fallen upon a logomachy setting more triumphantly at defiance every imaginable attempt to resolve it. The infidel affirmed, and the Christian denied, that Mary had ceased to be a virgin when she became a mother; and the clashing of sword and scimitar seemed about to succeed to the war of words, when, at the point of intersection of several roads, the Mahometan (so runs the story) gave spurs to his horse and fled. The champion of the Madonna followed; but, throwing the rein on the neck of his steed, he left it to the animal's discretion either to follow or to decline the road which the fugitive had taken. To the observance of this law or custom of chivalry, the Paynim was indebted that day for an uncloven skull—an advantage which his most Catholic Sovereign did not probably allow him long to enjoy.

At Montserrat, Ignatius performed such acts of devotion as might best besem so illustrious a sanctuary and so zealous a worshipper; and then betook himself to the adjacent town of Manreza, as a place admirably suited to the austerities with which he proposed to celebrate his self-dedication to Our Lady of the Serried Mount. Seven hours were daily given to prayer, during which he remained silent and motionless as a statue. His week-day diet was bread and water, to which on Sundays he added a condiment of herbs and ground ashes boiled together. Next to his skin he wore alternately an iron chain, a horse-hair cloth, and a sash of prickly briars. Three times each day he laid the scourge resolutely on his naked back. The bare earth was his bed. He became one of the fraternity of beggars who frequented the hospital of Manreza, exaggerated in his own person whatever was most revolting in their habits and appearance, revelled in filth, and rendered to the sick, and especially to such as were afflicted with ulcers, services of which it is impossible to read the account without a strong disposition to sickness.

It has long been known how fluently "the devil can quote Scripture for his purpose." but to Ignatius belongs the discovery,

that Satan can present his temptations to mankind in the form of excellent sense and sound reasoning. The Evil Spirit was, we are told, afflicted by his excessive humility, and consequent happiness ; and therefore assailed him with the following catechetical seduction :—" Is it not possible to be holy without being filthy ? Is it essential to the purity of your soul that vermin should crawl over your person ? Does it become a knight, of a lineage so noble as yours, to appear among men as a Lazar ? Would not your virtues yield a brighter and more effective example in the court or in the camp, than in this mean hospital ? "

To escape these diabolical suggestions, Ignatius quitted Manreza for a neighbouring cavern. It was in the centre of a wilderness, and could not be approached except by forcing the body through thorns and briars. At the extremity it was dark as the grave ; though a fortunate crevice or loophole near the entrance enabled the hermit to gaze at the distant church of Our Lady of Montserrat. In this dismal cell, he delivered over his mind and body to pains which entirely eclipsed those of his hospital at Manreza. Five times each day he bruised and tore his flesh with a blunt iron scourge, beating his bosom at intervals with sharp flint stones, and, with diseased ingenuity, perverting every act of adoration into a penance and a torture. At one time he would commune with the Virgin Mother ; at another he would wrestle with the Spirit of Evil ; and so abrupt were his vicissitudes of rapture and despair, that in the storm of turbid passions his reason had nearly given way. Friendly hands dragged him from his hiding-place, and other hands, in intention, at least, not less friendly, recorded his feverish ravings. At one time, he conversed with voices audible to no ear but his. At another, he sought to propitiate Him before whom he trembled, by expiations that would have been more fitly offered to Moloch. Spiritual doctors ministered to his relief, but they prescribed in vain. The simple truth was too simple for them. They could not perceive that in revealing Himself to mankind in the character of a Father, that awful Being has claimed, as peculiarly His own, the gentlest, the kindest, and the most confiding affections of our nature.

At the verge of madness Ignatius paused. That noble intellect was not to be whelmed beneath the tempests in which so many have sunk ; but neither was he to be rescued by any vulgar methods. Standing on the steps of a Dominican church, he was reciting the office of Our Lady, when (as all his biographers assure us) Heaven itself was laid open to the eye of the worshipper. That ineffable

mystery which the author of the Athanasian Creed has laboured to enunciate in words, was laid bare to him as an object, not of faith, but of actual sight. The past ages of the world were rolled back in his presence ; and he beheld the material fabric of things rising into being, and discerned the motives which had prompted this exercise of the creative energy. To his spiritualised sense was disclosed the mysterious process by which the Host is transubstantiated : and those other Christian verities, which it is permitted to common men to receive only as exercises of belief, now became known to him by immediate inspection and direct consciousness. During eight successive days his body reposed in an unbroken trance, while his spirit thus imbibed disclosures for which the tongues of men have no appropriate language. He attempted, indeed, to impart them in a volume of fourscore leaves ; but, dark with excess of light, his words held the learned and the ignorant alike in speechless wonder.

Ignatius returned to this sublunary scene with a mission not unmeet for an envoy from the empyrean world of which he had thus become a temporary denizen. He returned to establish on earth a theocracy of which he should himself be the first administrator, and to which multitudes of every tribe and kindred of men should be the subjects. He returned, no longer a sordid, half-distracted anchorite, but a kind of Swedenborg-Franklin ; distinguished alike by designs of gigantic magnitude and of superhuman audacity ; and by the clear good sense, the profound sagacity, the calm perseverance, and the flexible address with which he was to pursue them. He returned to show how the delirious enthusiasm of the cloister may be combined and reconciled, in the heroic nature, with the shrewdness of the exchange.

Neither in the hospital and cavern of Manreza, nor in his paroxysms of disease, nor in the ecstasies of his recovery, had the mind of Ignatius been really drifting without aim or anchorage. Among the saintly prodigies which had first amused his sick bed, and had then entranced the student of them, he had seized with peculiar fervour on the marvellous acts of Benedict, of Francis, and of Dominick ; and the idea of founding a new monastic dynasty became at first a plaything of the imagination ; then a settled desire of the heart ; and then a vast project revolved in his understanding from day to day, until it had at length become a probable, a consistent, and a comprehensive whole. He once more took his place in human society in the garb and with the exterior aspect of other men ; but labouring with a purpose which had already placed in his visionary

grasp the sceptre with which, in yet distant years, he was destined to rule his spiritual family, and through them, to agitate the nations of the earth, from the Ganges to La Plata.

The first fruits of the labours of Ignatius in the execution of this stupendous design was the Book of Spiritual Exercises. It was originally written in Spanish ; and, by the command of the Pope, Paul the Third, was rendered into two Latin versions—the first severely literal, the other exhibiting the sense, not only with greater elegance, but with more substantial accuracy. Paul then published a bull, dated the 31st July, 1548, in which he commended the latter of those translations to the study of the faithful. A new version of the Spiritual Exercises from an original Spanish MS., corrected in the handwriting of Ignatius himself, was published at Rome, in 1834, by the Rev. Father John Roothaan, the present General of the Order of Jesus. On collating that MS. with the text of 1548, M. Roothaan discovered that the former translators had, in many passages, not only misrepresented, but impaired the sense of the great author ; and his supposition is, that the humility of Ignatius had constrained him altogether to abandon his own literary composition to the disposal and to the mercy of others. Whatever may be the truth of this strange hypothesis, it is at least clear, that, till the year 1834, the world had never possessed a trustworthy edition of the single literary work of the great founder of Jesuitism.

The Spiritual Exercises form a manual of what may be termed "The Art of Conversion." It proposes a scheme of self-discipline by which, in the course of four weeks, passed in entire seclusion from the world, that mighty work is to be accomplished. In the first, the penitent is conducted through a series of dark retrospects to abase, and of gloomy prospects to alarm him. Those ends attained, he is, during the next seven days, to enrol himself in the army of the faithful, studying the biography of the Divine Captain of that elect host, and choosing with extreme circumspection that plan of life, religious or secular, in which he may best be able to tread in His steps, and to bear His standard, emblematical at once of suffering and of conquest. To sustain the soldier of the cross in this protracted warfare, his spiritual eye is to be directed, during the third of his solitary weeks, towards that unfathomable abyss of woe into which the Redeemer descended to rescue the race of Adam from the power of Satan and of death : and then seven suns are to rise and set while the disenthralled spirit is to chant triumphant hal-lujahs, elevating her desires heavenwards, contemplating glories till then unimaginable, and mysteries never before revealed : when,

at length, the spiritual exercises close by an absolute surrender of all the delights and interests of his sublunary state, as an holocaust, to be consumed by the undying flame of Divine love on the altar of the regenerate heart.

This book is at once a momentous chapter in the autobiography of Ignatius, and the earliest of his canons for the government of his future society. It discloses his own spiritual state during the penances and ecstasies of *Manreza*; and explains what is the condition of mind into which he desired to bring his expected associates in the anticipated labours then lying in dim and shadowy prospect before him. The book would be full of interest, if regarded merely as the one extant devotional production of a man of such commanding genius. It is yet more so, when considered as the one insight we possess into the early religious character of him whom the Papacy honours as the greatest of her champions, and the Reformation dreads as the most formidable of her antagonists.

As if to disappoint the expectations raised both by the subject and the object of the book, it is neither pathetic, nor impassioned, nor profound, nor learned; but, from one end to the other, invariably dry and didactic, even when it delineates and enjoins the highest raptures of devotion. It lays down rules for the conduct of what Bunyan calls the "siege of Mansoul," in the precise and peremptory style in which Vauban might have prescribed the plan of an attack on Mentz or Courtray. A series of operations is given for each, in order, of the twenty-eight days of devotional retirement. Each day has its preparatory prayer, and each one *prelude*, or more, —a prelude being an effort of the imagination, by which the recluse is to call up before his mental sight the persons or the places with which his thoughts are about to be engaged; or, if he is preparing to meditate on things not sensuous (as, for example, his own sinfulness), he is to conceive of such things in parable. Thus, he may represent to himself his body as a prison, and his soul as a prisoner; or the world as a desolate valley thronged with wild beasts, among whom he is condemned to wander as an exile.

After offering the prayer, and portraying to himself the "prelude" of the day, the penitent is required to traverse a prescribed line of contemplation, in which a certain number of indispensable points are marked for his guidance. The diurnal course has usually seven such stations. Take as a specimen the second day of the first week. On that day the exercitant is first to make a general survey of his past sins; secondly, to ponder over the malignity of each class of offences; thirdly, to compare his own baseness with the sanctity of the superior orders of intelligences; fourthly, to con-

trast them with the moral attributes of Deity ; fifthly, to consider (not without articulate exclamations) how his sins are aggravated by the providential bounties and the longsuffering of God ; sixthly, to offer, in a divine colloquy, vows of amendment ; seventhly, to repeat the Lord's Prayer.

In the same manner the neophyte has to perform, throughout the month, a daily series of penitential or eucharistic evolutions ; not as his own heart or as a higher influence may dictate, but at the word of command of his General. For even in the cavern of Manreza, Ignatius was still internally gazing on the encampment and siege of Pampeluna. In the lowest depths of his contrition he could never forget that he was a soldier. Although he had finally quitted the service of Ferdinand for that of the Madonna, visions of mortal enemies, of well-disciplined followers, and of glorious victories, still continued to haunt his fancy, and to guide his pen. He crowded his pages with military images long after he had laid aside the carnal weapons of a merely secular warfare.

Thus, on the fourth day of the second week, the performer of the spiritual exercises is to direct his mind's eye towards two vast champaigns. One is near Jerusalem ; where, in a pleasant valley, the belligerent Redeemer, resplendent in form, and, in aspect, of surpassing loveliness, erects His standard as the chief commander of all the holy and the wise, and from that noble army sends forth detachments of apostles, disciples, and ministers to rescue the inhabitants of every land from ruin, and to improve and bless every condition of human life. The other plain is a battle-field in the province of Babylon ; where, seated on a fiery throne, surrounded by fœtid vapours, horrible in shape, and of terrific countenance, stands Lucifer, the generalissimo of a malignant host—inveterate adversaries of Christ, and inexorable foes of the race of Adam, who, traversing the world at the bidding of their leader, propagate guilt, and lamentation, and woe in every abode of man, and pollute and sadden every soul which still retains any trace of her divine origin.

Throughout the book Ignatius prolongs this attempt to subjugate all the other faculties of the mind to the imagination. With that view the penitent is commanded to descend, like Dante, into the infernal regions, and there to look steadfastly on the mighty conflagration, and on the bodies of living fire in which the souls of the wicked are pent up. He is to listen to their howlings and blasphemies. He is to smell the smoke, the sulphur, and the putrescent odours, of the place of torment. He is to taste the bitter tears which are shed there ; and to handle the undying worm ; and to feel the scorching of the inextinguishable flame. At another

time he is to visit the abode to which the Virgin Mother, when wounded in her own soul, retired from Calvary ; and is to examine the plan, the chambers, the cells, and the oratory of her humble dwelling. This ideal vision is to rise higher still. The Deity himself is to be seen as actually present in all the elements—in the vegetation of plants—in the sensation of animals—in the intelligence of man. He is to be actually beheld in every creative and conservative energy, and in every sanctifying influence ; until the Divine omnipresence shall become, not a mere truth abiding in the reason, but an object of direct, though spiritual perception.

Closely interwoven with these revelations of what is to pass in the hidden chambers of imagery, are precepts of plain sound sense, like so many solid rocks breaking through the dazzling unrealities of the *Fata Morgana*. Thus Ignatius teaches, that he who would wisely choose his plan of life, must determine with himself what are the great ends of his existence ; so that to those ends all means may be subordinate, instead of rendering the ultimate design subordinate to what is merely instrumental. He directs us to suppose ourselves, not the persons by whom the choice of a calling is to be made, but the advisers of some very dear friend, whose circumstances exactly resemble our own ; and he bids us to follow the advice which we should give to that imaginary friend. We are taught to suppose the hour of death actually arrived, and are to choose our calling, as though in the actual presence of that awful antagonist of all self-indulgent sophistry. And to those who are meditating matrimony are prescribed a series of judicious reflections respecting the kind of household and establishment they ought to maintain ; respecting the right methods of governing them ; respecting the means of rendering their conversation and example instructive to their families ; and respecting the appropriation of their income between the several classes of expenditure, personal, domestic, and eleemosynary.

He must have been deeply read in the nature of man, who should have predicted such first-fruits as these from the restored health of the distracted visionary, who, in the hospital and cavern of Manreza, and in the long delirium which followed, had alternately sounded the basest strings of humility on earth, and the living chords which vibrate with spontaneous harmonies along the seventh heavens. His plan of transmuting profligates into converts by a mental process, of which, during any one of her evolutions round our planet, the moon is to witness the commencement and the close, may possibly pass for a plagiarism from the academies of Laputa. But Ignatius Loyola had his eyes open, and his attention

awake, even when most absorbed in dreams. By force of an instinct with which such minds as his alone are gifted, he could rival the shrewd, the practical, and the worldly wise, even when abandoning himself to the current of emotions which they are alike unable to comprehend or to endure. His mind resembled the body of his great disciple, Francis Xavier ; which, as he preached or baptized, rose majestically towards the skies, while his feet (the pious curiosity of his hearers ascertained the fact) retained their firm hold on the earth below. The object of the *Spiritual Exercises* was at once to excite and to control religious sensibilities. While aiming to exalt the soul above terrestrial objects, he was intent on disenchanting his followers of the self-deceits which usually wait on that exaltation. Though most remote from the tone of feeling which animates the gay and busy scenes of life, the book everywhere attests the keen scrutiny with which he had observed those scenes, and the profound discernment with which he had studied the actors in them. To his Protestant readers the *Evangelical* spirit of the writer must have been the occasion of great, and perhaps unwelcome, surprise. It would, indeed, be easy to extract from his pages many propositions which the Synod of Westminster would have anathematized ; but that grave assembly might have drawn from them much to confirm the chief article of their own confessions and catechisms. If he yielded an idolatrous homage to some of the demigods of Rome, his supreme adoration was strictly reserved for Him to whom alone adoration is due. If he ascribed to ritual expiations a false and imaginary value, all his mighty powers were bowed down in a submissive affiance in the Divine nature, as revealed to us under the veil of human infirmity, and of more than human suffering. Philip Doddridge, one of those who have breathed most freely on earth the atmosphere of heaven, produced, at the distance of two centuries, a work which the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola might have suggested, and of many parts of which it might have afforded the model ; so many are still the points of contact between those who, ranging themselves round the great common centre of the faith of Christians, occupy the most opposite positions in that expanded circle.

The nine years of the life of Ignatius which immediately followed the production of his book were worn away in pilgrimages, in feats of asceticism, in the working (as it was believed) of miracles, and in escapes, all but miraculous, from the dangers which his devout and martial spirit induced him to encounter. It is a steep path by which the heroes of the Church have scaled the sublime heights of "*Perfection* ;" and his vows constrained him thus to pursue it.

But the same vows obliged him to conduct his fellow-pilgrims from the City of Destruction to the Land of Beulah. In prison and in shipwreck, fainting with hunger or wasted with disease, his inflexible spirit brooded over that bright, though as yet shapeless vision ; until at length it assumed a coherent form as he knelt on the Mount of Olives, and traced there the last and the indelible foot-print of the ascending Redeemer of mankind. At that hallowed spot had ended the weary way of Him who had bowed the heavens, and come down to execute on earth a mission of unutterable love, and of thought-surpassing self-denial. There also was revealed to the prophetic eye of the founder of the Order of Jesus (no Seer like genius kindled by high resolves !) the long line of missionaries who, animated by his example, and guided by his instructions, should proclaim that holy name from the rising to the setting sun. It was indeed a futurity perceptible only to the telescopic eye of faith. At the mature age of thirty, possessing no language but his own, no science but that of the camp, and no literature beyond the biographies of Saints and Paladins, he became the self-destined teacher of the future teachers of the world. Hoping against hope, he returned to Barcelona ; and there, as the class-fellow of little children, commenced the study of the first rudiments of the Latin tongue.

Among the established facetiæ of the stage, is the distraction of some dramatic Eloisa attempting to conjugate the verb *Amo*, under the guidance of her too attractive Abelard. Few playwrights probably have been aware that the jest had its type, if not its origin, in the scholastic experience of Ignatius Loyola. His advance in the grammar was arrested by a malignant spirit at the same critical point, and in much the same manner. Assuming the garb of an angel of light, the demon succeeded in driving from his memory the inflections of the verb, by suggesting at each some corresponding elevation of his soul heavenwards. To baffle his insidious enemy, the harassed scholar implored the pedagogue to make a liberal use of that discipline, the pain or the efficacy of which, who that has endured it can ever forget ? The exorcism was complete. *Amo* became familiar to his recollection in all her affectionate moods, and in all her changeful tenses. Then began Thomas à Kempis to speak to him intelligibly ; and then Erasmus disclosed to him treasures of wisdom and of wit formerly buried in the impenetrable recesses of an unknown tongue. Energy won her accustomed triumphs ; and in the year 1528 he entered the University of Paris as a student of the Humanities, and of what was then called Philosophy.

The fourth of the ten decades of human life (those ten golden years in which other men achieve, or most strenuously labour for,

distinction), was devoted by Ignatius to the studies preparatory to his great undertaking. At one time he listened to the prælections of grave professors ; at another he traversed England and the Netherlands as a beggar, soliciting the means of subsistence. But, whether he sat at the feet of the learned, or sued for the alms of the rich, he was still maturing more lofty designs than the most ambitious monarch of the house of Valois, or of Plantagenet, had ever dared to cherish. At Paris he at length found the means of carrying into effect the cherished purposes of so many years. It was the heroic age of Spain ; and there was no field of adventure, secular or spiritual, into which the countrymen of Gonsalvo and of Cortes feared to follow any adventurous leader.

We have partly seen how Ignatius proposed to convert men into Jesuits by a course of solitary devotional exercises ; and we are not wholly unable to explain the method by which he rendered his own personal intercourse with them conducive to the same end. On the contemplative and the timid, he imposed severe exercises of active virtue. To the gay and ardent, he appealed in a spirit still more buoyant than their own. He presented himself neck deep in a pool of frozen water, to teach an otherwise obdurate debauchee how to subdue the appetites of the flesh. To a hard-hearted priest he made a general confession of his own sins, with such agonies of remorse and shame, as to break up, by force of sympathy, the fountains of penitence in the bosom of the confessor. He engaged at billiards with a joyous lover of the game, on condition that whichever of the two might be defeated should serve his antagonist during the following month in whatever manner the conqueror should prescribe ; and the victorious saint consigned his adversary to the performance of the four weeks of the Spiritual Exercises. He encouraged and shared the wildest ascetic extravagances of his disciples. His countenance was as haggard, his self-flagellations as cruel, and his couch and diet as sordid as the rest. When he saw them faint with the extremity of their sufferings, he would assume the prophetic character, and promote, by predicting, their recovery. Rodriguez, one of the gentlest and most patient of them, fled for relief to a solitary hermitage ; but found his retreat obstructed by a man whom he described as of terrible aspect and gigantic stature, armed with a naked sword, and breathing menaces. Hosed, another of his followers, happening to die at the moment when Ignatius, prostrate before the altar, was reciting from the Confiteor the words “ Et omnibus sanctis,” that countless host was (as the Saint assured the survivors) revealed to his eye, and, among them, resplendent in

glory, appeared his deceased friend, to sustain and animate the hopes of his still militant brethren.

Thus making himself all things to all men, he constrained his companions in study to become first his pupils, and then his associates in religion. Many of them, indeed, yielded at once, and without a struggle, to the united influence of his sanctity and his genius ; and, from these more docile converts, he selected no less than eight of the ten original members of his infant order. After performing the initiatory spiritual exercises, they all swore, on the consecrated Host in the crypt of St Denys, to accompany their spiritual father on a mission to Palestine ; or, if that should be impracticable, to submit themselves to the Vicar of Christ to be disposed of at his pleasure.

Impetuous as had been the temper of Ignatius in early life, he had now learnt to be patient of the tardy growth of great designs. Leaving his disciples to complete their studies at Paris, under the care of Peter Faber, he returned to Spain to recruit their number, to mature his plans, and perhaps to escape from a too familiar intercourse with his future subjects. In the winter of 1536, they commenced their pilgrimage to the Eternal City. At Venice they were joined by Ignatius. They who would conquer crowns, whether secular or spiritual, must needs tread in slippery places. As he journeyed to Rome, accompanied by Laynez, but in advance of the rest, he saw a vision, the account of which, derived from his own lips, it is painful to transcribe. It exhibited that Being whom no eye hath seen, and whom no tongue may lightly name ; and with Him the Eternal Son, bearing a heavy cross, and uttering the welcome assurance, "I will be propitious to you at Rome."

There can be no doubt that Ignatius made this statement, and that he made it with a conviction of its truth. But they must be in servitude to a party, and to a name, who can ascribe a due reverence for what is most high and most holy, to the mind which could admit such a conviction, and to the tongue which could give it utterance.

Notwithstanding this supposed divine promise, Ignatius found it no easy task to obtain the requisite papal sanction for the establishment of his Order. In that age the regular or monastic clergy had to contend with an almost universal unpopularity. With the bishops and secular priests they had long been waging a bitter warfare. They had now to encounter the additional hostility of the wits, the Reformers, and the Vatican itself. A large share of the disasters under which the Church of Rome was suffering was not unreasonably attributed to their laxity of manners and dissoluteness of life. To oppose his formidable antagonists in every part of Europe, the

Pope had given his confidence and encouragement to the Theatins, and other isolated preachers, who were labouring at once to protect and to purify the fold, by diffusing among them their own deep and genuine spirit of devotion. At such a moment it seemed an equivocal or dangerous policy to call another religious order into existence. Both the new and zealous allies, and the ancient supporters, of the Papacy, might be expected to regard such an institution with extreme jealousy and disfavour. Neither did the morbid foresight of the Vatican fail to perceive, that the chief of a society projected on a plan of such stupendous magnitude, might become a dangerous rival even to the successors of St Peter.

Ignatius, therefore, consumed three years in unprofitable suits for a bull of incorporation. He endeavoured, by lavish promises, to propitiate not mere mortal man only, but the Deity himself. He engaged to offer three thousand masses, if so his prayer might be granted. Earth and heaven seemed equally deaf to his offers, when at length terror extracted from Paul the Third the concession which no entreaty and no prayers had been able to extort.

The Reformation had crossed the Alps, and made an alarming progress in the very bosom of Italy. Ferrara seemed about to fall away from the Church of Rome, as Germany, England, and Switzerland had fallen. The death-struggle between the contending powers could no longer be averted or postponed. The Consistory then became enlightened to see the Divine hand in a scheme which they had, till then, regarded as the suspicious device of an ambitious and formidable man. They could no longer refuse the gratuitous and devoted services of a host, called, as it might seem, into existence, for the express purpose of defeating their hitherto invincible enemies—a host animated by an enthusiasm as ardent as that of the Reformers themselves, informed by a learning not less profound than theirs, and guided by that singleness of will and fixedness of purpose in which Luther and his associates were so eminently defective.

On the 27th of September, 1540, Paul the Third, therefore, affixed the papal seal to the bull of “Regimini,” the Magna Charta of the Order of Jesus. Admirable as was the foresight which dictated this grant, it was made with undisguised reluctance, with painful misgivings, and with an anxiety of which the instrument itself affords the clearest evidence. It places in the lips of the new society the following emphatical profession of their future subjection to the power from which they were to derive their corporate existence:—

“*Quamvis Evangelio doceamur, et fide orthodoxâ cognoscamus, ac firmiter profiteamur, omnes Christi fideles Romano Pontifici tan-*

quam capito, ac Jesu Christi vicario, subesse; ad majorem tamen nostræ societatis humilitatem, ac perfectam unius ejusque mortificationem, et voluntatum nostrarum abnegationem, summopere conducere judicavimus, singulos nos, ultra illud commune vinculum, speciali voto abstringi, ita ut quicquid Romani Pontifices pro tempore existentes jusserint, quantum in nobis fuerit exequi teneamur."

So wrote the Pope in the person of his new Prætorians. The first care of Ignatius was the election of a General of that formidable band. For that purpose he summoned the chief members of his company to Rome. They all concurred in choosing himself. He declined the proffered honour, and was a second time unanimously elected. Again he refused to govern, unless his confessor, to whom, as he said, all his bad dispositions were known, should command him, in the name of Christ, to submit to the hard necessity. The confessor accordingly pronounced that solemn injunction, and then Ignatius Loyola ascended the throne of which he had been so long laying the foundations. It will be credible that he seriously contemplated the renunciation of that high reward, when it shall be ascertained that Julius became Dictator, Cromwell Protector, and Napoleon First Consul, in their own despite; but not till then.

When finally invested with sovereignty, Ignatius wielded the sceptre as best becomes an absolute monarch, magnanimously and with unflinching decision; revered, but exciting no servile fear; beloved, but permitting no rude familiarity; declining no enterprise which high daring might accomplish, attempting none which headlong ambition might suggest; self-multiplied in the ministers of his will; yielding to them a large and generous confidence; trusting no man whom he had not deeply studied; assigning to none a province beyond the range of his capacity.

Though not in books, yet in the school of active, and especially of military life, Ignatius had learnt the great secret of government, at least of his government. That secret is, that the social affections, when concentrated within a well-defined circle, possess an intensity and an endurance unrivalled by those passions of which self is the immediate object. He had the sagacity to perceive that emotions like those with which a Spartan or a Jew had yearned over the land and the institutions of their fathers—emotions stronger than appetite, vanity, ambition, avarice, or death itself—might be kindled in the members of his Order, if he could grasp those mainsprings of human action of which the Greek and the Hebrew legislators had obtained the mastery. Nor did he make the attempt in vain.

He legislated at once in the spirit of his early and of his late profession—as a soldier and as a spiritual champion of the Church of

Rome. Obedience, prompt, absolute, blind, and unhesitating—the cardinal virtue of both—was the basis of his religious institute. Such submission, however arduous in appearance, is in reality the least irksome of all self-sacrifices. The mysterious gift of free will is the heaviest burthen of the vast multitude of mankind. The free subjects, and the heavenly appointed ministers, of the Jewish theocracy, took refuge from that service in the despotism of a man whose sole praise it was to be taller by the head and shoulders than any of them. In the same spirit men everywhere desire to walk by sight, not by faith—to obey the stern command of a superior, if so they may be absolved from listening for the still small voice of conscience—to bear the yoke of spiritual bondage, if so they may escape the fatigue of study, the labour of meditation, the pains of doubt, and the anxieties of mental freedom. Ignatius had well observed this propensity of the human heart, and he framed the Jesuit code with a constant reference to it.

He ordained that his Order should be an elective absolute monarchy for life. The Sovereign, or General, was to be chosen by a small senate or aristocracy. He was, of course, to possess every divine grace, and every human virtue. But he was also to possess middle age, good health, good looks; and, if to these gifts could be added former rank and consideration in the world, so much the better.

Christendom was to be divided into provinces, over each of which a president or provincial was to rule. To control the powers of the monarch, each of the five chief provincials was to have at Rome a representative, called an assistant; and the five assistants were to form a council, who should at once advise the general and watch over his conduct. The general, and each of his provincials, was to have attached to him a functionary called a monitor; whose office may be best described as being that of an external conscience.

Such securities as these were, however, totally inadequate to restrain the high prerogatives of Ignatius and his successors. They were to inspect the secrets of the soul of each member of the society, which, for that purpose, were to be disclosed to the general by the provincial in letters written as frequently as once a week. All employments and dignities of which any Jesuit was capable, were reserved for the patronage of the general, and of him alone. He was to assign to each member his duty and his station. The whole property of the Order was to be at his absolute disposal. He might alter the law, or, in particular cases, dispense with the observance of it.

To the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, common to all

the monastic orders, the professed Jesuit was to add an oath to proceed instantly to any part of the world to which the Pope might send him for the advancement of religion ; and every Jesuit was to bind himself to reject all secular or ecclesiastical dignities, except such as the society itself might have to bestow. But it was provided that if the Pope should constrain any member to accept a bishopric, he would, in that capacity, give heed to the advice of his general.

None might be admitted into the society without some remarkable endowments of intellect and piety, nor without good health, an agreeable person, and attractive manners. The novice was to renounce to the society all his worldly possessions. He must be exempt from all fetters of betrothment, or of any other contract which might bring him within the reach of the civil tribunals.

The process of what may be called "breaking in" a young Jesuit, was prescribed with great minuteness and severity. The objects of this discipline were to subdue all habits of indolence, to extinguish every sentiment of aristocratic rank, to eradicate the pride of personal independence, to infuse into the soul a spirit of instant, unscrupulous, unhesitating obedience, and to fasten on it the conviction that from the lips of the Superior were to be gathered the very oracles of God. To accomplish these ends, the appointed system of education was to be pursued with an intensity of purpose never to be relaxed. The Superior was never to shrink from the infliction of any necessary or wholesome pain. The Pupil was never to decline to apply himself to any useful arts, however mean, humiliating, or offensive.

In the science of social Dynamics it is written, that he is the king of men, *jure divino*, who, with the sublimest purposes and the most inflexible will, exacts the most absolute submission and the most painful sacrifices. To him are drawn the feeble-minded by the instinct of obedience, the audacious by the force of sympathy, the torpid by the craving for stimulants, the sceptical by the thirst for certainties, and the unoccupied by the desire to employ their ineffectual energies. By this title reigned Lycurgus and Mahomet over nations, Zeno in the schools, Benedict in the cloister, Columbus in exploration, Cortes in the camp, and Ignatius Loyola over the host which, at his summons, gathered round him to extend the dominion of the Church of Rome over the heretical and the heathen nations of the earth.

It was with a sublime audacity that he demanded their obedience. It was to be rendered, not merely in the outward act, but by the understanding and the will. He spoke to them, not with the

timidity of a fallible teacher, but as one invested with the delegated prerogatives of the divine Redeemer himself. “Non intueamini in personâ superioris, hominem obnoxium erroribus atque miseriis, *sed Christum ipsum.*” “Superioris vocem ac jussa non secus ac *Christi* vocem accipite.” “Ut statuatis vobiscum quicquid superior præcipit *ipsius Dei* præceptum esse ac voluntatem.”

He who wrote thus had not lightly observed how the spirit of man exults in bondage, if permitted to believe that the chain has been spontaneously assumed.

Neither had he inattentively examined the motives which will sometimes stimulate the most submissive to revolt. He granted to his followers the utmost liberty in outward things, which could be reconciled with their spiritual servitude. The enslaved soul was not to be rudely reminded of her slavery. There was to be no peculiar dress,—no routine of prayers and canticles,—no prescribed system of austerities,—no monastic seclusions.

Ignatius knew well how awful is the might of folly in all sublunary affairs. Therefore no frivolous, fickle, or feeble-minded proselyte was to find a place in his brotherhood.

He must be served by virgin minds, who could be ruled by prejudices of his own engrafting. Therefore no one could be admitted who had worn, though but for a single day, the habit of any other religious order.

Stern initiatory discipline must probe the spirits of the professed ; for both scandal and danger would attend the faintness of any leader in the host. Gentler probations must suffice for coadjutors, whether lay or spiritual ; for no host is complete without a body of irregular partisans.

The general himself—the centre and animating spirit of the whole company—he must rule for life, because ambition and cabal will fill up the intervals between frequent elections, and because the reverence due to royalty is impaired by the aspect of dethroned sovereigns. He must be absolute, because human authority can on no other terms exhibit itself as the image of the Divine. He must reign at a distance, and in solitude, because no government is effective in which imagination has not her proper work to do. He must be the ultimate depository of the secrets of the conscience of each of his subjects, because power can be irresistible only when guided by unlimited knowledge. No subject of his might accept any dignity, ecclesiastical or civil, beyond the precincts of the Order, because the general himself must be supreme in rank as in dominion, and must alone possess the means of gratifying the ambition, and attracting to himself the homage, of his dependents.

And the ultimate object of this scheme of government,—it must be vast enough to expand the soul of the proselyte to a full sense of her own dignity ; and practical enough to provide incessant occupation for his time and thoughts ; and difficult enough to bring all his powers into strenuous activity ; and dangerous enough to teach the lessons of mutual dependence. There must also be conflicts for the brave, and intrigues for the subtle, and solitary labours for the studious, and offices of mercy for the compassionate. To all and to each must be offered both a temporal and an eternal recompense,—in this life, the reward of a communion and a sympathy intense in proportion to the narrowness of its range, and stimulating in proportion to the mysterious secrecy in which it was to be exercised ; in the life to come, felicities of which the anxious heart was not permitted to doubt : for the promises of the wise, the fellowship of the holy, and the assurances of men whose claims to the Divine favour it would seem to them impious to question, formed the present earnest of that celestial inheritance.

If there be in any of our universities a professor of moral philosophy initiating his pupils into the science of human nature, let him study the constitutions of Ignatius Loyola. They were the fruit of the solitary meditation of many years. His midnight lamp threw its rays on nothing but his crucifix, his manuscript, his *Thomas à Kempis de Imitatione*, and the New Testament. Any other presence would have been a profane intrusion ; for the work (so, at least, he believed and taught) was but a transcript of thoughts imparted to his disembodied spirit, when in early manhood it had been caught up into the seventh heavens. As he wrote, a lambent flame, in shape like a tongue of fire, is said to have hovered about his head ; and, as may be read in his own hand in a still extant paper, the hours of composition were passed in tears of devotion, in holy ardour, in raptures, and amidst celestial apparitions.

Ignatius was not less admirable as an administrator, than as a giver, of laws. Taking his own immutable station at the seat and centre of spiritual empire, he committed to each of his proconsuls his province, to each of his ministers his function, and to the humblest of his agents his task, according to the natural or acquired aptitude of each for the work assigned him. He was intimately acquainted with the effects on human character of self-knowledge—of strenuous activity—and of protracted suffering. He therefore required his disciples to scrutinise the recesses of their own hearts until they turned for relief from the wonders and the shame within to the mysteries and the glories of the world of spirits. He exercised them by ceaseless employment, until the transmutation of means

into ends was complete, and efforts, at first the most irksome, had become spontaneous and even grateful to them. He disciplined them by every form of privation and self-inflicted pain, until fortitude, ripening into habit, became the source of delights which, however incomprehensible to the self-indulgent, are far more real and enduring than their own. He rendered them stoics, mystics, and enthusiasts; and then employed them in duties emphatically practical, to the purpose, and to the time.

Ignatius was not merely a legislator and a statesman, but, to the last breath he drew, a soldier also. He was a general, whose authority none might question,—a comrade, on whose cordiality all might rely,—a leader, who partook in every danger and hardship of his followers,—a strategist of consummate skill and of all-embracing survey. In his religious campaigns his policy was always aggressive. However inadequate might be the force at his command for defensive operations, he never hesitated to weaken it by detachments on a distant service, if he could so strike terror into nearer foes, and animate the courage of irresolute allies. In this spirit he encountered Lutheranism in Europe by addressing himself to the conversion to the faith of Rome of the barbarous or half-civilised nations of the earth. His searching eye long scanned the characters of his lieutenants to discover which of them was best qualified for that difficult and hazardous office. Even to him it was not easy to discover such men. They must not be only superior to all the allurements of appetite and the common infirmities of our nature, but superior also to those temptations which beset inquisitive minds, and men of the highest order of ability. His missionaries must be prepared to do and dare, but not much disposed to speculate. They must burn with an inextinguishable zeal, but must be insensible to the impulse for converting a subordinate into an independent command. He long weighed this perplexing choice, and decided it at length with the utmost sagacity and success. It fell on many who well fulfilled these conditions, but on none in whom all the requisites combined so marvellously as in the young Spanish noble who had borne himself so gallantly in the crypt of St Denys, and had conducted the pilgrimage to Rome of the first little company of the proselytes of Ignatius.

It was in the year 1505, that Francis Xavier, the youngest child of a numerous family, was born in the castle of his ancestors, in the Pyrenees. Robust and active, of a gay humour and ardent spirit, the young mountaineer listened with a throbbing heart to the military legends of his house, and to the hopes which spoke of days to come when his illustrious lineage should derive new splendour

from his own achievements. But the hearts of his parents yearned over the son of their old age, and the enthusiasm which would have borne him to the pursuit of glory in the camp, was directed by their counsels to the less hazardous contest for literary eminence at the University of Paris. From the embrace of Aristotle and his commentators, he would, however, have been prematurely withdrawn by the failure of his resources (for the lords of Xavier were not wealthy), if a domestic prophetess (his elder sister) had not been inspired to foretell his marvellous career and immortal recompense. His family acknowledged that all pecuniary sacrifices would be wisely made for a child destined to have altars raised to his name throughout the Catholic Church, and masses chanted to his honour till time should be no longer. He was thus enabled to struggle on at the College of St Barbara, until he had become qualified to earn his own maintenance as a public teacher of philosophy.

The chair of Xavier was crowded by the studious, and his society courted by the gay, the noble, and the rich. It was courted also by one who stood aloof from the admiring multitude—among them, but not of them. Sordid in dress, but of lofty bearing; unimpassioned, though intensely earnest; abstemious in speech, yet uttering occasionally, in deep and most melodious tones, words of strange significance, Ignatius Loyola was gradually working over the mind of his young companion a spell which no difference of taste, of habits, or of age, was of power to repel. Potent as it was, the charm was long resisted. Hilarity was the native element of Francis Xavier, and his grave monitor afforded him an inexhaustible theme of mirth and raillery. Armed with satire, which was not always playful, the light heart of youth contended as best it might against the solemn impressions which he could neither welcome nor avoid. Whether Xavier plunged into the amusements in which he delighted, or engaged in the disquisitions in which he excelled, or traced the windings of the Seine through the forest which then lined its banks, Ignatius was still at hand, ready to discuss with him the charms of society, of learning, or of nature; but whatever had been the subject of their discourse, it was still closed by the same awful inquiry, "What shall it profit the man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

The world which Xavier had sought to gain was already exhibiting to him its accustomed treachery. It had given him entertainment and applause, but it had stolen from him first his self-control, and then his pupils and emoluments. Ignatius was still at hand to repair his losses. He became the eulogist of the genius and the eloquence of his friend. He presented to him the scholars attracted to his chair by these panegyrics. He repeated them in the hearing

of the delighted teacher, but then, when the kindling eye of Xavier attested the sense of conscious merit and of well-established renown, he would check the rising exultation by the ever-recurring inquiry, "What shall it profit?"

Improvvidence squandered these new resources, but nothing could damp the zeal of Ignatius. There he was again, himself the poorest of the poor, yet ministering to the wants of Xavier from a purse filled by the alms he had solicited; but there again was also the same unvarying demand urged in the same rich though solemn cadence, "What shall it profit?"

In the unrelaxing grasp of the strong man, at once forgiven and assisted, beloved and rebuked by his stern associate, Xavier gradually yielded to the fascination. He became, like his monitor, impassive, at least in appearance, to all sublunary pains and pleasures, performed the initiatory rite of the Spiritual Exercises, and joined with his brethren in the vows of Montmartre, surpassed them all in the fervour of his devotion and the austerity of his self-discipline, and, in the winter of 1536, became the leader of their march to the Eternal City.

Accomplished in all courtly exercises, he prepared for his journey by binding tight cords round his arms and legs, in holy revenge for the pleasure which their graceful agility had once afforded him, and so pursued his way with Spartan constancy, till the corroded flesh closed obstinately over the ligatures. Miracle, the ever prompt handmaid of the energetic children of the Church of Rome, burst the bands which no surgeon could unloose, and her friendly presence was then attested by the toils which his unfettered limbs immediately endured in the menial service of his fellow-travellers.

At Venice they rejoined Ignatius, and there employed themselves in ministering to the patients in the hospitals. Foremost in every act of intrepid self-mortification, Xavier signalised his zeal by exploits, the mere mention of which the stomachs of our feeblar generation could not endure. While thus courting all the physical tortures of purgatory, his soul inhaled the anticipated delights of Paradise. These penances and raptures brought him twice to the gates of death; and then, in what he supposed to be his last extremity, he caused himself to be borne to places of public resort, that his ghastly aspect might teach the awful lessons which his tongue was no longer able to pronounce.

Such prodigies, whether enacted by the saints of Rome or by the saints of Benares, exhibit a sovereignty of the spiritual over the animal nature, which can hardly be contemplated without some feelings akin to reverence. But, on the whole, the hooked Faqueer,

spinning round his gibbet, is the more respectable suicide of the two. His homage is at least meet for the deity he worships. But that gracious Being, whose name had been assumed by Xavier and his associates, was equally victorious over the stoical illusions and the lower desires of our nature. When He made himself of no reputation, and took on Him the form of a servant, He yet sought repose amongst the domestic charities of life, and condescended to accept those blameless solaces which life has to offer to the weary and heavy laden. No services were ever offered to Him less in harmony with His serene self-reverence, than the vehement emotions, the squalid filth, and the lacerated frames of the first members of the Society of Jesus.

Whatever might have been the reward of Xavier's self-mortifications in another life, his name would probably have left no trace in this world's records, had it not happened that John III. of Portugal, resolving to plant the Christian faith in the Indian territories which had become subject to the dominion or influence of his crown, petitioned the Pope to select some fit leader of this peaceful crusade. The choice first fell on Bobadilla, who, however, was immediately seized with a fever of such violence as disqualified him for the enterprise. Then it was, as we are told, that Ignatius was enlightened from on high to perceive in Xavier the vessel of election. The holy father ratified the choice.

A happier selection could not have been made ; and never was a summons to toil, to suffering, and to death, so joyously received. In the visions of the night, he had often groaned beneath the incumbent weight of a wild Indian, of ebon hue and gigantic stature, seated on his shoulders. In those dreams he had often traversed tempestuous seas, enduring shipwreck, famine, and persecution, in their most ghastly forms ; and, as each peril was encountered, his panting soul had invoked yet more abundant opportunities of making such glorious sacrifices for the conversion of mankind. And now, when the clearer sense and the approaching accomplishment of these dark intimations were disclosed to him, passionate sobs attested the rapture which his tongue was unable to speak. He fell on his knees before Ignatius, kissed the feet of the holy father, repaired his tattered cassock, and, with no other provision than his breviary, left Rome on the 15th of March, 1540, for Lisbon, his destined port of embarkation for the East.

Light of heart, and joyful in discourse, he travelled from Rome across the Alps and Pyrenees. As he descended the southern slopes of his native mountains, there rose to his sight the venerable towers, beneath which he had enjoyed the sports of childhood, and woven

the day-dreams of youth ; where still lived the mother, who, during his first eighteen years, had day by day watched over him and blessed him, and the saintly sister, whose inspired voice had foretold his present high vocation. But it was all too high for even a momentary intrusion of the holiest of those feelings which are merely human. He was on his way with tidings of mercy to a perishing world, and had not one hour to waste, nor one parting tear to bestow, on those whom he best loved and most revered, and whom, in this life, he could never hope to meet again. We are not left to conjecture in what light his conduct was regarded. Martin D'Aypilcueta, surnamed the Doctor of Navarre, a grave and well-beneficed divine (a shrewd, thriving, hospitable, much-respected man, no unlikely candidate for the mitre, and a candidate, too, in his own drowsy way, for amaranthine crowns, and celestial blessedness), was the maternal uncle of Xavier, and very plausibly believed his nephew mad. He favoured his enthusiastic kinsman with much judicious remonstrance against his suicidal project. Half sportive, half indignant, was Xavier's answer :—" I care little, most illustrious Doctor, for the judgment of men, and least of all for their judgment, who decide before they hear and before they understand." Mad or sober, he was at least impelled by a force, at the first shock of which the united judiciousness and respectability of mankind must needs fall to pieces, —the force of will, concentrated on one great end, and elevated above the misty regions of doubt to that unclouded atmosphere, where Faith, attended by her sister Graces, Hope and Courage, Joy and Fortitude, converts the future into the present, and casts the brightest hues over objects the most repulsive to sense, and the most painful to our feeble nature.

As the vessel in which Xavier embarked for India fell down the Tagus, and shook out her reefs to the wind, many an eye was dim with unwonted tears, for she bore a regiment of a thousand men to reinforce the garrison of Goa ; nor could the bravest of that gallant host gaze on the receding land without foreboding that he might never see again those dark chestnut forests and rich orange groves, with the peaceful convents and the long-loved homes reposing in their bosom. The countenance of Xavier alone beamed with delight. He knew that he should never tread his native mountains more ; but he felt that he was not an exile. He was to depend for food and raiment on the bounty of his fellow-passengers ; but no thought for the morrow troubled him. He was going to convert nations of which he knew neither the language nor even the names ; but his soul was oppressed with no misgivings. Worn by incessant sickness, with the refuse food of the lowest seamen for his diet, and the cord-

age of the ship for his couch, he rendered to the diseased services too revolting to be described, and lived among the dying and the profligate, the unwearied minister of consolation and of peace. In the midst of that floating throng he knew both how to create for himself a sacred solitude, and how to mix in all their pursuits in the free spirit of a man of the world, a gentleman, and a scholar. With the viceroy and his officers, he talked as pleased them best, of war or trade, of politics or navigation. To restrain the common soldiers from gambling, he invented for their amusement less dangerous pastimes, or even held the stakes for which they played, that, by his presence and his gay discourse, he might at least check the excesses which he could not entirely prevent.

Five weary months (weary to all but him) brought the ship to Mozambique, where an endemic fever threatened a premature grave to the apostle of the Indies. But his was not a spirit to be quenched or allayed by the fiercest paroxysms of disease. At each remission of his malady he crawled to the beds of his fellow-sufferers to soothe their terrors, or assuage their pains. Just thirteen months after his departure from Lisbon, he reached Goa; the most wretched of mankind to the eye of any casual observer, but, in the esteem of his shipmates, the happiest and the most holy.

At Goa Xavier was shocked, and, had he been susceptible of fear, would have been dismayed, by the almost universal depravity of the inhabitants. It exhibited itself in those revolting forms which characterises the crimes of civilised men, when settled among a feebler race, and released from the restraints and conventional decencies of civilisation. Swinging a huge bell in his hand, Xavier passed along the streets of the city, imploring the astonished crowd to send their children to him to be instructed in the religion which they continued at least to profess. Though he had never been addressed by the soul-stirring name of father, he knew that there is one chord which never can be wholly out of tune in the hardest and the most dissolute heart which has once felt the parental instinct. A crowd of little ones were quickly placed under his charge. He lived among them, at once the most laborious of teachers and the gentlest and gayest of friends; and then returned them to their homes, that, by their example, they might there impart, with the unconscious eloquence of filial love, the lessons of wisdom and of piety which they had been taught.

No cry of human misery reached him in vain. He took up his abode in the hospitals; selecting that of the leprous as the object of his peculiar care. Even in the haunts of debauchery, and at the tables of the profligate, he was to be seen an honoured and a

welcome guest. He delighted that most unmeet audience with the vivacity of his discourse ; and spared neither pungent jests to render vice ridiculous, nor sportive flatteries to allure the fallen back to the paths of soberness and virtue. These were hazards not to be incurred, even by Francis Xavier, with impunity. Suspicion and reproach followed, and still pursue, these deviations from the highways of Christian instruction ; nor would it perhaps be possible to make a successful defence of all the freedoms into which his ardent zeal occasionally urged him. But strong in purity of purpose, and stronger still in one sacred remembrance, he was content to be called "the friend of publicans and sinners." He had long since deserted the standard of Prudence, the offspring of Forethought, for the banners of Wisdom, the child of Love, and followed them through perils not to be braved with impunity under any less triumphant leaders.

Rugged were the ways along which he was thus conducted. In those times, as in our own, there was a pearl fishery on the western shores of the Strait of Manaar, and then, as now, the pearl divers formed a separate and a degraded caste. It was not till after a residence of many months at Goa that Xavier heard of these people. He heard that they were ignorant and miserable, and he inquired no farther. On that burning shore his bell once more rang out an invitation of mercy, and again were gathered around him troops of inquisitive and docile children. He lived long among these abject fishermen ; his only food their rice and water, their huts his only shelter, and a sleep of three hours during the four and twenty the measure of his repose. He became at once their physician, the arbiter in their disputes, and their advocate with the Governor of Goa for the remission of their annual tribute.

He became also their teacher in the doctrines and precepts of Christianity. Destitute as he was, at first, of any acquaintance with their language, the undertaking would have daunted any spirit less ardent than his ; and it is, indeed, to this day, disputed, between the members of his Order and their antagonists, whether he acquitted himself of it in anything more than outward semblance and unmeaning form.

When the inhabitants of Cape Comorin were delivered by the Portuguese from their Mahomedan invaders, they did homage to their new masters by submitting their persons to the baptismal ablution, though their minds remained as dark as before, and their course of life not less licentious. To these Paravas (so they were called) Xavier proceeded ; taking with him two interpreters, appointed to that service by the Bishop of Goa. In a letter to his

brethren of the Society of Jesus, dated in January, 1544, he thus describes his method of introducing these people to the knowledge of the Christian faith :—

Having carefully selected some of the more intelligent of their number, and especially such of them as could converse both in the Spanish and the Malabar tongues, he laboriously accomplished, by their aid, translations of the Catechism, of the Apostles' Creed, of the Ten Commandments, of the Lord's Prayer, and of some of the devotional offices of the Church of Rome. After committing these versions to his own memory, he undertook a circuit through the country ; summoning the natives to gather round him at each town and village by the sound of his bell, which he rang out on his arrival there. To these assemblages he recited his formularies, repeating them again and again, until they had learnt them by heart. The children, as usual, proved the aptest scholars ; and when they were perfect in their tasks he despatched them to teach what they had thus acquired, to their parents and neighbours.

On every Sunday he preached on the text thus impressed beforehand on the minds of his hearers ; employing, of course, at first, the intervention of his interpreters. These sermons opened with a comment on the Creed ; to each article of which his hearers, and especially the candidates for baptism, gave their audible assent. The Commandments were then repeated and explained ; each Commandment being succeeded by a prayer (in which the whole assembly joined) for grace to observe it. The Lord's Prayer followed ; and the series of congregational offices was closed by Xavier's reciting, in the language of his hearers, an epitome of the Christian faith, and an exhortation to lead a Christian life. Then came the baptism of the catechumens ; after which the assembly was dismissed.

In every heathen land which he subsequently visited, Xavier pursued the same method of propagating the faith. A most ineffectual method, in the judgment of his Protestant censors. They have no respect or forgiveness for his barbarous translations into semi-barbarous tongues, of formularies and symbols which the most profound scholars have but imperfectly succeeded in transfusing into the most polished dialects of modern Europe. They find much occasion for mirth in the grotesque accents in which the missionary's unpractised tongue must have preached in a foreign idiom, and in the darkness in which an impromptu interpretation must have involved his sermons. To inject into uncultivated minds thoughts so remote from their antecedent knowledge and conceptions, is pronounced a desperate enterprise ; and it is not without a compas-

sionate smile that these critics refer to the prejudice which has ventured to claim the reverence of mankind for such delirious zeal, and so much impotent benevolence.

If this judgment be just, it must at least be acknowledged to be a notable and curious occurrence, that such a man as Francis Xavier first abandoned himself to a life of religious extravagance, and then became the unconscious chronicler of his own folly. He who had taught the learning of his times with high applause at Paris, was certainly no prating sciolist. The friend and chosen companion of Ignatius Loyola and of Iago Laynez, could not be destitute of that wisdom which is to be gained by converse with the wise. He who had associated with every class of society, from the hospital to the throne, could not be unprovided with the knowledge which the world has to impart. The author of such missionary journals as his could not be wanting in clear good sense ; for in that respect they may well challenge comparison with the best performances of the most sober-minded of those who, in our own days, have described their own labours in the same field. Nor could Xavier have been betrayed, as so many are betrayed, into foolishness by knavery ; for the most jealous eyes have searched his reports and letters in vain for one wilful deviation from truth, or for so much as a solitary proof that he was actuated by any indirect or sinister designs. Strange then is it, if such a man drew a self-portraiture, full of glaring absurdity, without perceiving it.

It is not improbable that these or some similar censures may have reached his own ears. The sleek, worldly-wise traders of Goa, can scarcely have failed to anticipate them ; and as in that case the despised herald of the Gospel can hardly have held his peace, we may, with some plausibility, suppose him to have made to the scornful some such answer as the following :—

“However feeble may be the means by which I endeavour to bring the natives of India into the fold of Christ, they are at least the best means at my command ; and woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel ! They are also the only means at present taken by any one who calls himself a Christian, to atone for the wrongs inflicted on them by their Christian rulers. If the contumelies cast on my teaching reached me only, they would be insignificant ; but let it be well considered whether they will not glance aside from me, and strike against ministrations incomparably higher and holier than mine. When in one day Peter called three thousand converts out of the world—when Philip admitted the Ethiopian into the Church—or when Paul acknowledged the gaoler of Philippi as a brother in Christ—neither Peter, nor Philip, nor Paul had imparted to

those proselytes any instruction beyond the first and elementary articles of the faith. When the same great Apostle of the Gentiles wrote his pastoral letters to the Greeks, he employed what to them must have appeared an uncouth and barbarous dialect. When he spoke to the Corinthians, it was not with excellency of speech, but in the foolishness of preaching. When others addressed them in unknown tongues, Paul did not command that the stranger should be silenced, but that his discourse should be interpreted. When He who spoke as never man spake, condescended to appear on our earth, His mightiest eloquence—that by which He moved, subdued, and penetrated the heart—was the eloquence, not of speech, but of a life of which each painful step was taken at the bidding of love, and under the guidance of wisdom. Be it then the care of myself and of my fellow-labourers to tread, however feebly, and at however great a distance, in the footsteps of our adorable Master. Let us humbly endeavour to evangelise these outcasts of the human family chiefly by our loving-kindness, our self-denial, and our personal sanctity. But with our words also, though spoken with a stammering tongue, and through an imperfect medium, we will endeavour to make known to them the commands delivered by God himself on Sinai, the prayer dictated by Christ himself to His disciples, and the earliest confession of the faith transmitted to us by His Church. The truths we thus speak may indeed appear to the natural man to be foolishness, but by the spiritual man they may be spiritually discerned; for there *are* truths which, though man's wisdom teach them not, are yet effectually taught by Him without whose present aid all teaching is vain, and all wisdom is folly."

It is not a merely gratuitous conjecture that such would have been the substance of Xavier's apology. It is the burthen of his letters, that the living exhibition of the Christian character is the first great instrument of Christian conquests over idolatry; and that the inculcation of elementary truth is the second. But while he is thus ever mindful of his own responsibility for the souls of the heathen of his own times, he presses with even painful importunity on his correspondents, the importance of providing for a succession to himself of missionaries eminent for holiness and for learning; and, amidst all his fatigues and anxieties, his eye is ever fixed upon the prospects opened by the college which he had established at Goa, for training up natives of India as the future teachers of their countrymen.

It is, indeed, true (though the truth be uttered in the contemptuous tone best calculated to provoke contradiction), that a Chris-

tianity, nominal, formal, and external, was, after all, the best fruit to be gathered, or to be rationally expected, from the rude efforts of Xavier for the conversion of the Paravas. But where is that country, and what is that time, in which Christianity has been more than this amongst the great multitude of those who have called and professed themselves Christians? The travellers in the narrow path, who are guided by her vital spirit, have ever been the "chosen few." The travellers along the broad way, wearing her exterior and visible badges, have ever been the "many called." And yet he who should induce any heathen people to adopt the mere ceremonial of the Church, to celebrate her ritual, and to recognise, though but in words, the authority of her Divine Head, would confer on them a blessing exceeding all which mere human philanthropy has ever accomplished or designed. For such is the vivifying influence of the spirit of the Gospel, that it can never long be otherwise than prolific of the highest temporal benefits to all, and of the highest spiritual benefits to some, in every land which acknowledges it as a rule of life and receives it as a system of worship. If Xavier had succeeded so far only as to diffuse through the East that kind and that degree of Christianity which at this day exists amongst the formalists of Europe, such a success would almost justify the papal apotheosis which has assigned to him a throne in heaven and a perennial homage on earth.

It is not without exultation, or indeed without truth, that we are reminded that even to this extent Xavier did not eventually succeed. The triumph over his failure would be abated if due attention were given to the causes of it. His mantle never fell on any of his successors. His place was taken by men of worldly minds and of worldly policy. They recited his formularies, but did not imitate his holiness, and found (as how could they but find?) that with the spirit of his apostolate the power of it had departed. Ere long the Portuguese were expelled from India. They had conquered there, but had not colonized; and in these later ages colonization has been the habitual, perhaps the indispensable, forerunner of the Gospel among barbarous or half-civilized tribes. When Christianity becomes the religion of the highest caste, as in the transatlantic continents and colonies, in Western and in Southern Africa, and in the great Australian islands, converts from heathenism are to be counted by millions. For idolatry, being not a principle, but a mere habit, has ever fallen, and will ever fall down in the presence of Truth, when Truth presents herself sustained by power and arrayed in dignity. We shall Christianise India in proportion as we Anglicise her. If in Xavier's days England had been sovereign of the East,

that renovating process would ere now have been complete ; and by this time Brahma and Veeshnu would have retired in the peninsula into the same position which Odin and Woden are now occupying in Scandinavia.

Doubtless the superstitions with which the creed of the Church of Rome has disfigured the Gospel, contributed largely to prevent or to impair Xavier's success. Yet if they who followed him had been men of a like spirit with his, as well as of the same creed, and if his nation had retained and colonized her Asiatic dominion, that which has happened in the transatlantic conquests of the great Roman Catholic powers, would also have happened in the Eastern empire of the House of Braganza ; and India would at present be overspread with Christian churches, acknowledging the Pope as their supreme earthly head, and revering Francis Xavier as their great spiritual progenitor.

Between the eulogists and the censors of Xavier it is still further debated whether the ultimate ill-success of his missions is or is not to be ascribed to his ignorance of the languages of India. His friends maintain that the miraculous gift of tongues fell upon him while residing near Cape Comorin. His opponents deny that he ever acquired the vernacular speech of that country at all. The real difficulty is to determine which of these two opinions is the more extravagant. His imputed ignorance of the native tongue of those amongst whom he so long lived, and for whom he laboured with such fervent zeal, is hardly less incredible than the supposed miraculous intervention to impart it to him. If, at the end of several years, he had not acquired the power of conversing intelligibly with his followers, the idlest lad from the East India College at Haylebury, now stationed in those regions, may boast of an energy and of talents surpassing those of Francis Xavier ; and he who was at once a Spanish Cavalier and a devoted missionary, must have deliberately and repeatedly suggested in his letters falsehoods enough to rack the conscience of a Christian with remorse, and to crimson the cheek of a gentleman with self-reproach. The fact seems to be that Xavier was at best but a moderate linguist, and that he never acquired the perfect command of any language except his own. At the commencement of each of his successive missions he acknowledges and bewails his inability to make any colloquial use of the tongues spoken by the people amongst whom he had arrived. Yet, from the commencement of each, he recited to wondering crowds such translations as he could obtain of the creeds and formularies of the faith ; aiding the defects of his discourse by tones and gestures which spoke to the imagination and to the hearts of his hearers.

Ere long, however, he seems to have learnt to converse, to argue, and to preach among every new assemblage of his Asiatic disciples at least intelligibly, though perhaps never with elegance or correctness. But among such a people, and on such topics, a man of fervent spirit, of natural eloquence, and of high rank, need not be either correct or elegant in order to be impressive.

Whatever may have been the ultimate fate of Xavier's missions, or the cause of their decay, it is nothing more than wanton scepticism to doubt that, in his own lifetime, the apparent results were such as to justify the most sanguine of his anticipations. Near Cape Comorin he appointed thirty different teachers, who under himself were to preside over the same number of Christian churches. Many an humble cottage there was surmounted by a crucifix, the mark of its consecration to public worship, and many a rude countenance reflected the sorrows and the hopes which they had been taught to associate with that sacred emblem.

In reporting these labours to his society, the habitual calmness of Xavier's style is once, at least, interrupted by passionate exclamations. "I have left myself," he says, "nothing to add on this subject, except that so intense and abundant are the delights which God is accustomed to bestow on those who labour diligently in His service in the vineyard in this barbarous land, that if there be, in this life, any true and solid enjoyment, I believe it to be this and this alone. There is one among those who are so employed" (he is obviously referring to himself), "whom I frequently overhear saying, 'Overwhelm me not, O my God, with such happiness in this life ! or if, of Thine infinite beneficence and mercy, Thou shalt be pleased still to bestow it upon me, then take me hence to the abode of the blessed ; for he whose inward sense has once tasted of these delights, must needs regard existence as a heavy burden so long as it is passed without the beatific vision of Thyself.'"

This prayer for some mitigation of his happiness was not unanswered. A hostile invasion from the kingdom of Bisnagore swept before it the poor fishermen of Cape Comorin, destroyed their simple chapels, and drove them for refuge to the barren rocks and sand banks on the western shores of the Strait of Manaar. The tidings brought their good father Xavier, on the wings of love, to share and solace their affliction, to procure for them food and succour from the viceroy at Goa, and to direct their confidence to an infinitely better Father, whose presence they might acknowledge, and whose goodness they might adore, even amidst the wreck of all their earthly possessions.

To teach the same salutary lesson to those on whom such pos-

sessions had been bestowed in far more ample abundance, Xavier crossed the peninsula to Travancore, in the hope of converting the Rajah and his courtiers. His anxious friends earnestly dissuaded a journey so full of peril; and the language in which he repels these timid counsels might pass for a quotation from one of the indignant letters of Martin Luther. "There are moments," he says, "when I am weary of life, and when I think that it would be better to die in the cause of God than to witness such a contemptuous disregard of his authority as I am at once constrained to observe and unable to prevent. To escape from the sight and the report of such iniquity, how gladly would I migrate into Ethiopia, or into the dominions of Prester John, where, without meeting opposition from any one, I might render so many services to the Most High. For nothing afflicts me so acutely as my want of power to make an effectual resistance to those who are insulting the majesty of Heaven. May God pardon them, abide with you, and accompany me."

If any reliance may be placed on his own statements, his success at Travancore justified his daring and surpassed his highest expectations. He reported in February, 1545, that God had brought many of the inhabitants to the faith, and had, by his means, converted more than ten thousand men in a single month. Passing from one village to another, he repeated the same formularies which he had recited among the Paravas, and founded on them the same instructions. He baptized till his hands dropped with weariness and his voice became inaudible; experiencing, as he says, in his whole soul, a joy which it would be vain to attempt to express either in writing or by speech.

It is difficult, or rather impossible, to determine what deduction would have been made from Xavier's estimate of the results of his mission to Travancore, if tried by those sober tests which he was himself too deeply agitated to employ. Some part of his success may have been a mere hallucination of his own overwrought feelings. Something may be ascribed to the terror with which the Portuguese arms had at that time affected the native powers of India, and disposed them to conciliate their European invaders. The ancient traditions of Christianity which had lingered in that part of the peninsula from remote days (the traditions of St Thomas's residence there is a modern fable), may have given the appearance of a conquest to what was, at least to some extent, a mere restoration. But when every abatement which these and similar considerations may suggest shall have been made, we must reject testimony the most unambiguous, and opposed by no conflicting evidence, if we deny the general truth of Xavier's statement. A solitary, poor, and unpro-

tected stranger, he had burst through the barriers which separate men of different races and of different tongues. His meaning may have been ill understood, but by some mysterious force of sympathy his hearers quickly caught his ardour. Idols and their temples fell beneath the blows of their former worshippers. Christian churches rose at his bidding ; and Travancore was possessed with new ideas, and agitated by unwonted controversies.

Amongst the triumphs of the Gospel thus wrought by his own agency, Xavier refers, with expressions of intense delight, to the vast multitude of infants whom he had baptized, and whom death had transferred to Paradise, in the untarnished bloom of their baptismal innocence ; and he vehemently implores his general and associates to increase the number of the missionaries in the same field, from which, by this simple process, so vast a harvest of these tender plants might be continually gathered into the heavenly garner. Those who believe, with him, in this astounding efficacy of the sacrament of baptism, must needs number him among the greatest benefactors of his species ; for no other man ever brought down, by his ministration, a blessing of such unutterable magnitude on so vast a multitude of babes and sucklings. It is, indeed, a subject of curious inquiry, why the adherents of that doctrine do not rise to the more than human, and yet easy, office of love which invites them ? By employing a few active emissaries to baptize infant Hindoos, they would confer, on the race of man, benefits infinitely eclipsing all the results of all the labours of all the philanthropists who have trodden this earth from the days of Adam to our own. Why, then, is this mighty work of benevolence unattempted ? It is because they who are driven by a tyrannical logic to these most marvellous consequences, escape the pressure of them by something which is superior to all logic and proof against all argumentation ; even by those indestructible instincts of our nature, and by that free spirit of the Gospel, which will dash to pieces the inference and the belief, that the Almighty Father of us all has really made the eternal weal or woe of our children to depend on the observance or neglect of an ablution to be sprinkled by the hands, and of a benediction to be pronounced by the lips, of mortal man.

Against these innovations of Xavier, the Brahmins argued—as the Church by law established has not seldom argued—with fire and sword, and the interdict of earth and water to the enemies of their repose. A foreign invader threw a still heavier sword into the trembling scales. From the southward appeared on the borders of Travancore the same force which had swept away the poor fishermen of Malabar. Some embers of Spanish chivalry still glowed in the

bosom of Xavier. He flew to the scene of the approaching combat, and there, placing himself in the van of the protecting army, poured forth a passionate prayer to the Lord of Hosts, raised on high his crucifix, and, with kindling eyes, and far-resounding voice, delivered the behests of Heaven to the impious invaders. So runs the tale, and ends (it is almost superfluous to add) in the rout of the astounded foe. It is a matter of less animated, and perhaps of more authentic history, that for his services in this war Xavier was rewarded by the unbounded gratitude of the Rajah, was honoured with the title of his Great Father, and rescued from all further Brahminical persecution.

Power and courtly influence form an intoxicating draught even when raised to the lips of an ascetic and a saint. Holy as he was, the Great Father of the Rajah of Travancore seems not entirely to have escaped this feverish thirst. Don Alphonso de Souza, a weak though amiable man, was at that time the Viceroy of Portuguese India; and Xavier (such was now his authority) despatched a messenger to Lisbon to demand rather than advise his recall. For within the limits of his high commission (and what subject is wholly foreign to it?) the ambassador of the King of kings may owe respect but hardly deference to any mere earthly monarch. So argued Francis, so judged King John, and so fell Alphonso de Souza, as many a greater statesman has fallen, and may yet fall, under the weight of sacerdotal displeasure.

Weakness, however, was not the only recorded fault of De Souza. Towards the northern extremity of Ceylon lies the Island of Manaar, a dependency, in Xavier's day, of the adjacent kingdom of Jaffna, where then reigned a sort of Oriental Philip II. The islanders had become converts to the Christian faith, and expiated their apostasy by their lives. Six hundred men, women, and children fell in one royal massacre; and the tragedy was closed by the murder of the eldest son of the King of Jaffna, by his father's orders. Deposition in case of misgovernment, and the transfer to the deposing power of the dominions of the offender, was no invention of Hastings or of Clive. It is one of the most ancient constitutional maxims of the European dynasties in India. It may even boast the venerable suffrage of St Francis Xavier. At his instance, De Souza equipped an armament to hurl the guilty ruler of Jaffna from his throne, and to subjugate his territories to the most faithful King. In the invading fleet the indignant saint led the way, with promises of triumphs, both temporal and eternal. But the expedition failed. Cowardice or treachery defeated the design. De Souza paid the usual penalties of ill success. Xavier sailed away to discover other fields of spiritual warfare.

On the Malabar coast, near the city of Meliapor, might be seen in those times an oratory in which St Thomas, the first teacher of Christianity in India, was supposed to have worshipped, and a tomb in which it was believed that his body had been laid. It was in a cool and sequestered grotto that, according to this local tradition, the Apostle had been wont to pray ; and there yet appeared on the living rock, in bold relief, the cross at which he was said to have knelt, with a crystal fountain of medicinal waters gushing from the base of it. In a church on the neighbouring height was a marble altar, on which (according to the same legend) might still be traced, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, indelible blood-stains, ascertaining the sacred spot at which the Apostle had won the crown of martyrdom, and where his bones had been committed to the dust. To this venerable shrine Xavier retired to learn the will of Heaven concerning his future progress. If we may believe the oath of one of his fellow-pilgrims, he maintained, on this occasion, for seven successive days, an unbroken fast and silence—no unfit preparation for his approaching conflicts. Even round the tomb of the Apostle malignant demons prowled by night ; and, though strong in the guidance of the Virgin, Xavier not only found himself in their obscene grasp, but received from them blows, such as no weapons in human hands could have inflicted, and which had nearly brought to a close his labours and his life. Baffled by a superior power, the fiends opposed a still more subtle hindrance to his designs against their kingdom. In the garb and in the outward semblance of a band of choristers, they disturbed his devotions by such soul-subduing strains, that the very harmonies of Heaven might seem to have been awakened to divert the Christian warrior from his heavenward path. All in vain their fury and their guile ! He found the direction he implored ; and the first bark which sailed from the Malabar shore to the city of Malacca, bore the obedient missionary to that great emporium of eastern commerce.

Thirty years before the arrival of Xavier, Malacca had been conquered by Alphonso Albuquerque. It was a place abandoned to every form of sensual and enervating indulgence. Through her crowded streets a strange and solemn visitor passed along, pealing his accustomed bell, and earnestly imploring the prayers of the faithful for that guilty people. Curiosity and alarm soon gave way to ridicule ; but Xavier's panoply was complete. The messenger of divine wrath judged this an unfit occasion for courting aversion or contempt. He became the gayest of the gay, and, in address, at least, the very model of an accomplished cavalier. Foiled at their own weapons, his dissolute countrymen acknowledged the irresist-

ible authority of a self-devotion so awful, relieved, and embellished, as it was, by every social grace. Thus the work of reformation prospered, or seemed to prosper. Altars rose in the open streets, the confessional was thronged by penitents, translations of devout books were multiplied; and the saint, foremost in every toil, applied himself with all the activity of his spirit to study the structure and the graceful pronunciation of the Malayan tongue. But the plague was not thus to be stayed. A relapse into all their former habits filled up the measure of their crimes. With prophetic voice Xavier announced the impending chastisements of Heaven; and shaking off from his feet the dust of the obdurate city, pursued his indefatigable way to Amboyna.

That island, then a part of the vast dominions of Portugal in the east, had scarcely witnessed the commencement of Xavier's exertions, when a fleet of Spanish vessels appeared in hostile array on the shores. They were invaders, and even corsairs; for their expedition had been disavowed by Charles V. Pestilence, however, was raging among them; and Xavier was equally ready to hazard his life in the cause of Portugal, or in the service of her afflicted enemies. Day and night he lived in the infected ships, soothing every spiritual distress, and exerting all the magical influence of his name to procure for the sick whatever might contribute to their recovery or soothe their pains. The coals of fire thus heaped on the heads of the pirates, melted hearts otherwise steeled to pity; and to Xavier belonged the rare, perhaps the unrivalled, glory of repelling an invasion by no weapons but those of self-denial and of love.

But glory, the praise of men, or their gratitude, what were these to him! As the Spaniards retired peacefully from Amboyna, he, too, quitted the half-adoring multitude, whom he had rescued from the horrors of a pirate's war, and, spurning all the timid counsels which would have stayed his course, proceeded, as the herald of good tidings, to the half-barbarous islands of the neighbouring Archipelago. "If those lands," such was his indignant exclamation, "had scented woods and mines of gold, Christians would find courage to go there; nor would all the perils of the world prevent them. They are dastardly and alarmed, because there is nothing to be gained there but the souls of men; and shall love be less hardy and less generous than avarice? They will destroy me, you say, by poison. It is an honour to which such a sinner as I am may not aspire; but this I dare to say, that whatever form of torture or of death awaits me, I am ready to suffer it ten thousand times for the salvation of a single soul." Nor was this the language of a man

insensible to the sorrows of life, or really unaffected by the dangers he had to incur. "Believe me, my beloved brethren" (the quotation is made from a letter written by him at this time to the Society at Rome), "it is in general easy to understand the evangelical maxim, that he who will lose his life shall find it. But when the moment of action has come, and when the sacrifice of life for God is to be really made, oh then, clear as at other times the meaning is, it becomes deeply obscure! so dark, indeed, that he alone can comprehend it, to whom, in His mercy, God himself interprets it. Then it is we know how weak and frail we are."

Weak and frail he may have been; but from the days of Paul of Tarsus to our own, the annals of mankind exhibit no other example of a soul borne onward so triumphantly through distress and danger in all their most appalling aspects. He battled with hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and assassination; and pursued his mission of love, with even increasing ardour, amidst the wildest war of the contending elements. At the island of Moro (one of the group of the Moluccas) he took his stand at the foot of a volcano; and as the pillar of fire threw up its wreaths to heaven, and the earth tottered beneath him, and the firmament was rent by falling rocks and peals of unintermitting thunder, he pointed to the fierce lightnings, and the river of molten lava, and called on the agitated crowd which clung to him for safety to repent, and to obey the truth; but he also taught them that the sounds which racked their ears were the groans of the infernal world, and the sights which blasted their eyes an outbreak from the atmosphere of the place of torment. Repairing for the celebration of mass to an edifice which he had consecrated for the purpose, an earthquake shook the building to its base. The terrified worshippers fled, but Xavier, standing in meek composure before the rocking altar, deliberately completed that mysterious sacrifice, with a faith, at least in this instance enviable, in the real presence; rejoicing, as he states in his description of the scene, to perceive that the demons of the island thus winged their flight before the archangel's sword, from the place were they had so long exercised their foul dominion. There is no schoolboy of our days who could not teach much, unsuspected by Francis Xavier, of the laws which govern the material and the spiritual worlds. But we have not many doctors who know as much as he did of the nature of Him by whom the worlds of matter and of spirit were created; for he studied in the school of protracted martyrdom and active philanthropy, where are divulged secrets unknown and unimagined by the wisest and the most learned of ordinary men. Imparting everywhere such knowledge

as he possessed, he ranged over no small part of the Indian Archipelago ; and at length retraced his steps to Malacca, that he might learn whether his exhortations and his prayers might even yet avert her threatened doom.

It appeared to be drawing nigh. Alaradin, a Mahomedan chief of Sumatra, had laid siege to the place at the head of a powerful fleet and army. Ill provided for defence by land, the Portuguese garrison was still more unprepared for a naval resistance. Seven shattered barks, unfit for service, formed their whole maritime strength. Universal alarm overspread the city, and the governor himself at once partook and heightened the general panic. Already thoughts of capitulation had become familiar to the besieged ; and European chivalry had bowed in abject silence to the insulting taunts and haughty menaces of the Moslem. At this moment, in his slight and weather-beaten pinnace, the messenger of peace on earth effected an entrance into the beleaguered harbour. But he came with a loud and indignant summons to the war ; for Xavier was still a Spanish cavalier, and he "thought it foul scorn" that gentlemen, subjects of the most faithful King, should thus be bearded by barbaric enemies, and the worshippers of Christ defied by the disciples of the Arabian impostor. He assumed the direction of the defence. By his advice the seven dismantled ships were promptly equipped for sea. He assigned to each a commander ; and, having animated the crews with promises of both temporal and eternal triumphs, despatched them to meet and conquer the hostile fleet. As they sailed from the harbour, the admiral's vessel ran aground, and instantly became a wreck. Returning hope and exultation as promptly gave way to terror ; and Xavier, the idol of the preceding hour, was now the object of popular fury. He alone retained his serenity. He upbraided the cowardice of the governor, revived the spirits of the troops, and encouraged the multitude with prophecies of success. Again the flotilla sailed, and a sudden tempest drove it to sea. Day after day passed without intelligence of its safety, and once more the hearts of the besieged failed them. Rumours of defeat were rife. The Mahomedans, it was said, had effected a landing within six leagues of the city, and Xavier's name was repeated from mouth to mouth with cries of vengeance. He knelt before the altar, though the menacing people were scarcely restrained by the sanctity of the place from immolating him there as a victim to his own disastrous counsels. On a sudden his bosom was seen to heave as with some deep emotion ; he raised aloft his crucifix, and with a glowing cheek, and in tones like one possessed, breathed a short yet passionate prayer for victory. A solemn

pause ensued ; the dullest eye could see that within that now fainting, pallid, agitated frame, some power more than human was in communion with the weak spirit of man. What might be the ineffable sense thus conveyed from mind to mind, without the aid of symbols or of words ! One half-hour of deep and agonising silence held the awe-stricken assembly in breathless expectation—when, bounding on his feet, his countenance radiant with joy, and his voice clear and ringing, as with the swelling notes of the trumpet, he exclaimed, “Christ has conquered for us ! At this very moment his soldiers are charging our defeated enemies ; they have made a great slaughter—we have lost only four of our defenders. On Friday next the intelligence will be here, and we shall then see our fleet again.” The catastrophe of such a tale need not be told. Malacca followed her deliverer and the troops of the victorious squadron, in solemn procession to the church ; where, amidst the roar of cannon, the pealing of anthems, and hymns of adoring gratitude, his inward sense heard and revered that inarticulate voice which still reminded him, that for him the hour of repose and triumph might never come, till he should reach that state where sin would no longer demand his rebuke, nor grief his sympathy. He turned from the half-idolatrous shouts of an admiring people, and retraced his toilsome way to the shores of the Indian peninsula.

He returned to Goa a poor and solitary, but no longer an obscure man. From the Indus to the Yellow Sea, had gone forth a vague and marvellous rumour of him. The tale bore that a stranger had appeared in the semblance of a wayworn, abject beggar, who, by some magic influence, and for some inscrutable ends, had bowed the nations to his despotic will, while spurning the wealth, the pleasures, and the homage which they offered to their conqueror. Many were the wonders which travellers had to tell of his progress, and without number were the ingenious theories afloat for the solution of them. He possessed the gift of ubiquity ; he could at the same moment speak in twenty different tongues on as many dissimilar subjects ; he was impassive to heat, cold, hunger, and fatigue ; he held hourly intercourse with invisible beings, the guides or ministers of his designs ; he raised the dead to life, and could float, when so it pleased him, across the boiling ocean on the wings of the typhoon. Among the listeners to these prodigies had been Auger, a native and inhabitant of Japan. His conscience was burdened with the memory of great crimes, and he had sought relief in vain from many an expiatory rite, and from the tumults of dissipation. In search of the peace he could not find at home he

sailed to Malacca, there to consult with the mysterious person of whose *avatar* he had heard. But Xavier was absent; and the victim of remorse was retracing his melancholy voyage to Japan, when a friendly tempest arrested his retreat, and once more brought him to Malacca. He was attended by two servants, and with them, by Xavier's directions, he proceeded to Goa. In these three Japanese his prophetic eye had at once seen the future instruments of the conversion of their native land; and to that end he instructed them to enter on a systematic course of training in the college, which he had established for such purposes, at the seat of Portuguese empire in the east. At that place Xavier, ere long, rejoined his converts. Such had been their proficiency, that, soon after his arrival, they were admitted not only into the Church by baptism, but into the Society of Jesus by the performance of the spiritual exercises.

The history of Xavier now reaches a not unwelcome pause. He pined for solitude and silence. He had been too long in constant intercourse with man, and found that, however high and holy may be the ends for which social life is cultivated, the habit, if unbroken, will impair that inward sense through which alone the soul can gather any true intimations of her nature and her destiny. He retired to commune with himself in a seclusion where the works of God alone were to be seen, and where no voices could be heard but those which, in each varying cadence, raise an unconscious hymn of praise and adoration to their Creator. There for a while reposing from labours such as few other of the sons of men have undergone, he consumed days and weeks in meditating prospects beyond the reach of any vision unenlarged by the habitual exercise of beneficence and piety. There, too, it may be (for man must still be human), he surrendered himself to dreams as baseless, and to ecstasies as devoid of any real meaning, as those which haunt the cell of the maniac. Peace be to the hallucinations, if such they were, by which the giant refreshed his slumbering powers, and from which he roused himself to a conflict never again to be remitted till his frame, yielding to the ceaseless pressure, should sink into a premature but hallowed grave.

Scarcely four years had elapsed from the first discovery of Japan by the Portuguese, when Xavier, attended by Auger and his two servants, sailed from Goa to convert the islanders to the Christian faith. Much good advice had been, as usual, wasted on him by his friends. To Loyola alone he confided the secret of his confidence. "I cannot express to you" (such are his words) "the joy with which I undertake this long voyage; for it is full of extreme perils, and

we consider a fleet sailing to Japan as eminently prosperous in which one ship out of four is saved. Though the risk far exceeds any which I have hitherto encountered, I shall not decline it ; for our Lord has imparted to me an interior revelation of the rich harvest which will one day be gathered from the cross when once planted there." Whatever may be thought of these voices from within, it is at least clear, that nothing magnanimous or sublime has ever yet proceeded from those who have listened only to the voices from without. But, as if resolved to show that a man may at once act on motives incomprehensible to his fellow-mortals, and possess the deepest insight into the motives by which they are habitually governed, Xavier left behind him a code of instructions for his brother missionaries, illuminated in almost every page by that profound sagacity which results from the union of extensive knowledge with acute observation, mellowed by the intuitive wisdom of a compassionate and lowly heart. The science of self-conquest, with a view to conquer the stubborn will of others—the art of winning admission for painful truth—and the duties of fidelity and reverence in the attempt to heal the diseases of the human spirit—were never taught by uninspired man with an eloquence more gentle, or an authority more impressive.

A long voyage, pursued through every disaster which the malevolence of man and demons could oppose to his progress (for he was constrained to sail in a piratical ship, with idols on her deck and whirlwinds in her path), brought him, in the year 1549, to Japan, there to practise his own lessons, and to give a new example of heroic perseverance. His arrival had been preceded by what he regarded as fortunate auguries. Certain Portuguese merchants, who had been allowed to reside at the principal seaport, inhabited there a house haunted by spectres. Their presence was usually announced by the din of discordant and agonising screams ; but when revealed to the eye, they exhibited forms resembling those which may be seen in pictures of the infernal state. Now the merchants, secular men though they were, had exorcised these fiends by carrying the cross in solemn procession through the house ; and anxious curiosity pervaded the city for some explanation of the virtue of this new and potent charm. There were also legends current through the country which might be turned to good account. Xaca, the son of Amida, the *Virgo Deipara* of Japan, had passed a life of extreme austerity to expiate the sins of men, and had inculcated a doctrine in which even Christians must recognise a large admixture of sacred truth. Temples in honour of the mother and child overspread the land, and suicidal sacrifices were daily offered in them. The Father of Lies had further propped up his kingdom in Japan by a profane parody

on the institutions of the Catholic Church. Under the name of the Saco, there reigned in sacerdotal supremacy a counterpart of the holy father at Rome, who consecrated the Fundi or Bishops of this Japanese hierarchy, and regulated at his infallible will whatever related to the rites and ceremonies of public worship. Subordinate to the Fundi were the Bonzes, or Priests in holy orders; who, to complete the resemblance, taught, and at least professed to practise, an ascetic discipline. But here the similitude ceases; for, adds the Chronicle, they were great knaves and sad hypocrites.

With these foundations on which to build, the ideas which Xavier had to introduce into the Japanese mind, might not very widely jar with those by which they were preoccupied. Auger, now called Paul of the Holy Faith, was despatched to his former friend and sovereign, with a picture of the Virgin and the infant Jesus; and the monarch and his courtiers (we are told) admired, kissed, and worshipped the sacred symbols. Xavier himself (to use his own words) "stood by, a mere mute statue;" but there was Promethean fire within, and the marble soon found a voice. Of all his philological achievements this was the most marvellous. He who, in the decline of life, bethinks him of all that he once endured to unlock the sense of *Æschylus*, and is conscious how stammering has been the speech with which, in later days, he has been wont to mutilate the tongues of *Pascal* and of *Tasso*, may think it a fable that, in a few brief weeks, Xavier could converse and teach intelligibly in the involved and ever-shifting dialects of Japan. If the sceptic had ever studied to converse with living men under the impulse of some passion which had absorbed every faculty of his soul, he might perhaps relax his incredulity; but whatever be the solution, the fact is attested on evidence which it would be folly to discredit—that within a very short time Xavier began to open to the Japanese, in their own language and to their clear understanding, the commission with which he was charged. Such, indeed, was his facility of speech, that he challenged the Bonzes to controversies on all the mysterious points of their and his conflicting creeds. The arbiters of the dispute listened as men are apt to listen to the war of words; and many a long-tailed Japanese head was shaken, as if in the hope that the jumbling thoughts within would find their level by the oft-repeated oscillation. It became necessary to resort to other means of winning their assent; and in exploits of asceticism, Xavier had nothing to fear from the rivalry of Bonzes, of Fundi, or of the great Saco himself. *Cangoxima* acknowledged, as most other luxurious cities would perhaps acknowledge, that he who had such a mastery over his own appetites and passions, must be animated by some

power wholly exempt from any such debasing influence. To fortify this salutary though not very sound conclusion, Xavier betook himself (if we will believe his historian) to the working of miracles. He compelled the fish to fill the nets of the fishermen, and to frequent the bay of Cangoxima, though previously indisposed to do so. He cured the leprous, and he raised the dead. Two Bonzes became the first, and indeed the only fruits of his labours there. The hearts of their brethren grew harder as the light of truth glowed with increasing but ineffectual brightness around them. The king also withdrew his favour; and Xavier, with two companions, carried the rejected messages of mercy to the neighbouring states of the Japanese empire.

Carrying on his back his only viaticum, the vessels requisite for performing the sacrifice of the mass, he advanced to Firando, at once the seaport and the capital of the kingdom of that name. Some Portuguese ships riding at anchor there, announced his arrival in all the forms of nautical triumph:—flags of every hue floating from the masts, seamen clustering on the yards, cannon roaring from beneath, and trumpets braying from above. Firando was agitated with debate and wonder; all asked, but none could afford, an explanation of the homage rendered by the wealthy traders to the meanest of their countrymen. The solution of the enigma was given by the humble pilgrim himself, surrounded, in the royal presence, by all the pomp which the Europeans could display in his honour. Great was the effect of these auxiliaries to the work of an evangelist; and the modern, like the ancient Apostle, ready to become all things to all men, would no longer decline the abasement of assuming, for a moment, this world's grandeur, when he found that such puerile arts might allure the children of the world to listen to the voice of wisdom. At Meaco, then the seat of empire in Japan, so useful a discovery might be reduced to practice with still more important success; and thitherwards his steps were promptly directed.

Unfamiliar to the ears of us barbarians of the North-Western Ocean are the very names of the seats of Japanese civilisation through which his journey lay. At Amanguchi, the capital of Nagoto, he found the hearts of men hardened by sensuality; and his exhortations to repentance were repaid by showers of stones and insults. "A pleasant sort of Bonze, indeed, who would allow us but one God and one woman!" was the summary remark with which the luxurious Amanguchians disposed of the teacher and his doctrine. They drove him forth half naked, with no provision but a bag of parched

rice, and accompanied only by three of his converts—men prepared to share his danger and his reproach.

It was in the depth of winter ; dense forests, steep mountains, half-frozen streams, and wastes of untrodden snow, lay in his path to Meaco. An entire month was consumed in traversing the wilderness ; the cruelty and scorn of man not seldom adding bitterness to the rigours of nature. On one occasion the wanderers were overtaken in a thick jungle by a horseman bearing a heavy package. Xavier offered to carry the load, if the rider would requite the service by pointing out his way. The offer was accepted ; but hour after hour the horse was urged on at such a pace, and so rapidly sped the panting missionary after him, that his tortured feet and excoriated body sank in seeming death under the protracted effort. In the extremity of his distress no repining word was ever heard to fall from him. He performed this dreadful pilgrimage in silent communion with Him for whom he rejoiced to suffer the loss of all things ; or spoke only to sustain the hope and courage of his associates. At length the walls of Meaco were seen, promising a repose not ungrateful even to his adamantine frame and fiery spirit. But repose was no more to visit him. He found the city in all the tumult and horrors of a siege. It was impossible to gain attention to his doctrines amidst the din of arms ; for even the Saco, or Pope of Japan, could give heed to none but military topics. Chanting from the Psalmist —“ When Israel went out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from a strange people,” the Saint again plunged into the desert, and retraced his steps to Amanguchi.

Xavier describes the Japanese very much as a Roman might have depicted the Greeks in the age of Augustus ; as at once intellectual and sensual voluptuaries, on the best possible terms with themselves, a good-humoured but faithless race, equally acute and frivolous, talkative and disputatious. — “ Their inquisitiveness,” he says, “ is incredible, especially in their intercourse with strangers, for whom they have not the slightest respect, but make incessant sport of them.” Surrounded at Amanguchi by a crowd of these babblers, he was plied with innumerable questions about the immortality of the soul, the movement of the planets, eclipses, the rainbow, sin, grace, paradise, and hell. He heard and answered. A single response solved all these problems. Astronomers, meteorologists, metaphysicians, and divines, all heard the same sound ; but to each it came with a different and an appropriate meaning. So wrote from the very spot Father Anthony Quadros, four years after the event ; and so the fact may be read in the process of Xavier’s canonisation.

Possessed of so admirable a gift, his progress in the conversion of these once contemptuous people is the less surprising. Their city became the principal seat of learning in Japan, and therefore, of course, the great theatre of controversial debate. Of these polemics there remains a record of no doubtful authenticity, from which disputants of higher name than those of Amanguchi might take some useful lessons in the dialectic art. Thrusts better made, or more skilfully parried, are seldom to be witnessed in the schools of Oxford or of Cambridge.

In the midst of controversies with men, Xavier again heard that Divine voice to which he never answered but by instant and unhesitating submission. It summoned him to Fucheo, the capital of the kingdom of Bungo. It was a city near the sea, which had for its port a place called Figer, where a rich Portuguese merchant-ship was then lying. At the approach of the Saint (for such he was now universally esteemed) the vessel thundered from all her guns such loud and repeated discharges, that the startled sovereign of Bungo despatched messengers from Fucheo to ascertain the cause of so universal an uproar. Nothing could exceed the astonishment with which they received the explanation. It was impossible to convey to the monarch's ear so extravagant a tale. A royal salute for the most abject of lazars ! for a man (to use their own energetic language) "so abhorred of the earth that the very vermin which crawled over him loathed their wretched fare !" If mortal man ever rose or sunk so far as to discover, without pain, that his person was the object of disgust to others, then is there one form of self-dominion in which Francis Xavier has been surpassed. Yielding, with no perceptible reluctance, to the arguments of his countrymen, and availing himself of the resources at their command, he advanced to Fucheo, preceded by thirty Portuguese clad in rich stuffs, and embellished with chains of gold and precious stones. "Next came, and next did go," in their gayest apparel, the servants and slaves of the merchants. Then appeared the apostle of the Indies himself, resplendent in green velvet and golden brocade. Chinese tapestry, and silken flags of every brilliant colour, covered the pinnace and the boats in which this brilliant procession was rowed up to the city ; and the oars rose and fell to the sound of trumpets, flutes, and hautboys. As they drew near to the royal presence, the commander of the ship marched bareheaded, and carrying a wand as the esquire or major-domo of the Father. Five others of her principal officers, each bearing some costly article, stepped along, as proud to do such service ; while he, in honour of whom it was rendered, moved onwards with the majestic gait of some feudal

chieftain marshalling his retainers, with a rich umbrella held over him. He traversed a double file of six hundred men-at-arms drawn up for his reception; and interchanged complimentary harangues with his royal host, with all the grace and dignity of a man accustomed to shine in courts, and to hold intercourse with princes.

His Majesty of Bungo seems to have borne some resemblance to our own Henry the Eighth, and to have been meditating a revolt from the Saco and his whole spiritual dynasty. Much he said at the first interview, to which no orthodox Bonze could listen with composure. It drew down, even on his royal head, the rebuke of the learned Faxiondono. "How," exclaimed that eminent divine, "dare you undertake the decision of any article of faith without having studied at the university of Fianzima, where alone are to be learned the sacred mysteries of the gods! If you are ignorant, consult the teachers appointed to direct you. Here am I, ready to impart to you all necessary instruction." An university still more renowned than Fianzima has, in our own times, given birth to many a learned doctor who might pass for nothing more than a servile imitator of the pretensions of the sage Faxiondono. But the replies which the great "Tractarian" of Bungo provoked were most unlike those by which his Oxonian successors are usually assailed. Never was King surrounded by a gayer circle than that which then glittered at the court of Fucheo. The more the Bonze lectured on his own sacerdotal authority, the more laughed they. The King himself condescended to aid the general merriment; and congratulated his monitor on the convincing proof he had given of his heavenly mission, by the display of an infernal temper. To Xavier he addressed himself in a far different spirit. The triple crown might have lighted on his head without allaying the thirst of his soul for the conversion of mankind; and the European pomp with which he was, for the moment, environed, left him still the same living martyr to the faith which it was the one object of his life to propagate. His rich apparel, and the blandishments of the great, served only to present to him, in a new and still more impressive light, the vanity of all sublunary things. He preached, catechised, and disputed with an ardour and a perseverance which threatened his destruction, and alarmed his affectionate followers. "Care not for me," was his answer to their expostulation; "think of me as a man dead to bodily comforts. My food, my rest, my life, are to rescue from the granary of Satan the souls for the sake of whom God has sent me hither from the ends of the earth." To such fervour the Bonzes of Fucheo could offer no effectual resistance. One of the most eminent of their number cast away his idols, and

became a Christian. Five hundred of his disciples immediately followed his example. The King himself, a dissolute unbeliever, so far was moved (and the smallest concessions of the rulers of the earth in such cases must be handsomely acknowledged) as to punish in others the crimes which he persisted in practising himself; and as to confess that the very face of the Saint was as a mirror, reflecting by the force of contrast all the hideousness of his own vices. Revolting, indeed, they were; and faithful were the rebukes of the tongue, no less than of the countenance, of Xavier. The royal offender was at length touched and awed. His conversion was about to crown the labours of his monitor; and the worship of Xaca and Amida in the kingdom of Bungo seemed waning to its close. It was an occasion which demanded from their priesthood every sacrifice; nor was the demand unanswered.

For thirty years the mysteries of the faith of the Bonzes had been taught in the most celebrated of their colleges, by a doctor who had fathomed all divine and human lore; and who, except when he came forth to utter the oracular voice of more than earthly wisdom, withdrew from the sight of men into a sacred retirement, there to hold high converse with the immortals. Fucarondono, for so he was called, announced his purpose to visit the city and palace of Fucheo. As when, in the agony of Agamemnon's camp, the son of Thetis at length grasped his massive spear, and the trembling seashores resounded at his steps—so advanced to the war of words the great chieftain of Japanese theology, and so rose the cry of anticipated triumph from the rescued Bonzes. Terror seized the licentious King himself, and all foreboded the overthrow of Xavier and Christianity. "Do you know, or rather, do you remember me?" was the inquiry with which this momentous debate was opened. "I never saw you till now," answered the Saint. "A man who has dealt with me a thousand times, and who pretends never to have seen me, will be no difficult conquest," rejoined the most profound of the Bonzes. "Have you left any of the goods which I bought of you at the port of Frenajona?"—"I was never a merchant," said the missionary, "nor was I ever at Frenajona."—"What a wretched memory!" was the contemptuous reply; "It is precisely five hundred years to-day since you and I met at that celebrated mart; when, by the same token, you sold me a hundred pieces of silk, and an excellent bargain I had of it." From the transmigration of the soul the sage proceeded to unfold the other dark secrets of nature—such as the eternity of matter; the spontaneous self-formation of all organised beings; and the progressive cleansing of the human spirit in the nobler and holier of our race, at each successive change,

until they attain to a perfect memory of the past, and are enabled to retrace their wanderings from one body to another through all preceding ages ; looking down, from the pinnacles of accumulated wisdom, on the grovelling multitude, whose recollections are confined within the narrow limits of their latest corporeal existence. That Xavier refuted these perplexing arguments we are assured by a Portuguese bystander who witnessed the debate ; though unhappily no record of his arguments has come down to us. "I have," says the historian, "neither science nor presumption enough to detail the subtle and solid reasonings by which the Saint destroyed the vain fancies of the Bonze."

Yet the victory was incomplete. Having recruited his shattered forces, and accompanied by no less than 3000 Bonzes, Fucarondono returned to the attack. On his side Xavier appeared in the field of controversy attended by the Portuguese officers in their richest apparel. They stood uncovered in his presence, and knelt when they addressed him. Their dispute now turned on many a knotty point ;—as, for example, Why did Xavier celebrate masses for the dead, and yet condemn the orthodox Japanese custom of giving to the Bonze bills of exchange payable in favour of the dead ? So subtle and difficult were their inquiries, that Xavier and his companion, the reporter of the dispute, were compelled to believe that the spirit of evil had suggested them ; and that they were at last successfully answered, is ascribed to the incessant prayers which, during the whole contest, the Christians offered for their champion. Of this second polemical campaign we have a minute and animated account. It may be sufficient to extract the conclusion of the royal Moderator. "For my own part," he said, "as far as I can judge, I think that Father Xavier speaks rationally, and that the rest of you don't know what you are talking about. Men must have clear heads or less violence than you have to understand these difficult questions. If you are deficient in faith, at least employ your reason, which might teach you not to deny truths so evident ; and do not bark like so many dogs." So saying, the King of Bungo dissolved the assembly. Royal and judicious as his award appears to have been, our Portuguese chronicler admits that the disputants on either side returned with opinions unchanged ; and that, from that day forward, the work of conversion ceased. He applies himself to find a solution of the problem, why men who had been so egregiously refuted should still cling to their errors ; and why any one should obstinately adhere to practices so irrefragably proved to be alike foolish and criminal. The answer, let us hope, is, that the obstinacy of the people of Bungo was a kind of *lusus naturæ*,

a peculiarity exclusively their own ; that other religious teachers are more candid than the Bonzes of Japan ; and that no Professor of Divinity could elsewhere be found so obstinately wedded to his own doctrines as was the learned Fucarondono.*

In such controversies, and in doing the work of an evangelist in every other form, Xavier saw the third year of his residence at Japan gliding away, when tidings of perplexities at the mother church of Goa recalled him thither, across seas so wide and stormy, that even the sacred lust of gold durst hardly brave them in that infancy of the art of navigation. As his ship drove before the monsoon, dragging after her a smaller bark which she had taken in tow, the connecting ropes were suddenly burst asunder, and in a few minutes the two vessels were no longer in sight. Thrice the sun rose and set on their dark course ; the unchained elements roaring as in mad revelry around them, and the ocean seething like a cauldron. Xavier's shipmates wept over the loss of friends and kindred in the foundered bark ; and shuddered at their own approaching doom. He also wept ; but his were grateful tears. As the screaming whirlwind swept over the abyss, the present Deity was revealed to his faithful worshipper, shedding tranquillity, and peace, and joy over the sanctuary of a devout and confiding heart. "Mourn not, my friend," was his gay address to Edward de Gama, as he lamented the loss of his brother in the bark ; "before three days, the daughter will have returned to her mother." They were weary and anxious days ; but as the third drew towards a close a sail appeared in the horizon. Defying the adverse winds, she made straight towards them ; and at last dropped alongside, as calmly as the sea-bird ends her flight, and furls her ruffled plumage on the swelling surge. The cry of miracle burst from every lip ; and well it might. There was the lost bark, and not the bark only, but Xavier himself on board her ! What though he had ridden out the tempest in the larger vessel, the stay of their drooping spirits, he had at the same time been in the smaller ship, perform-

* It seems necessary to state, that the Portuguese traveller by whom this debate is reported, is Ferdinando Mendez Pinto ; on whom Congreve, in "Love for Love," has conferred an unenviable immortality. "Capricorn in your teeth" (exclaims Foresight to Sir Samson Legend), "thou modern Mandeville ! Ferdinando Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude." The wits have ever been at war with the travellers ; and Abyssinian Bruce sustained, and has survived, still ruder shocks than Pinto the Orientalist suffered at the hands of Congreve. There can be no doubt that he was present with Xavier at Japan ; nor is it easy to discover any reason for distrusting this part of his narrative. The text contains only a brief extract from it. If the story be really fictitious, Pinto must have possessed far greater knowledge and talents (especially dramatic talents) than have hitherto been ascribed to him.

ing there also the same charitable office ; and yet, when the two hailed and spoke each other, there was but one Francis Xavier, and he composedly standing by the side of Edward de Gama, on the deck of the "Holy Cross." Such was the name of the commodore's vessel. For her services on this occasion, she obtained a sacred charter of immunity from risks of every kind ; and as long as her timbers continued sound, bounded merrily across seas in which no other craft could have lived.

During this wondrous voyage, her deck had often been paced in deep conference by Xavier and Iago de Pereyra, her commander. Though he pursued the calling of a merchant, he had, says the historian, the heart of a prince. Two great objects expanded the thoughts of Pereyra—the one, the conversion of the Chinese empire ; the other, his own appointment as ambassador to the celestial court of Pekin. In our puny days, the dreams of traders in the East are of smuggling opium. But in the sixteenth century no enterprise appeared to them too splendid to contemplate, or too daring to hazard. Before the "Holy Cross" had reached Goa, Pereyra had pledged his whole fortune, Xavier his influence and his life, to this gigantic adventure. In the spring of the following year, the apostle and the ambassador (for so far the project had in a few months been accomplished) sailed from Goa in the "Holy Cross," for the then unexplored coasts of China. As they passed Malacca, tidings came to Xavier of the tardy, though complete, fulfilment of one of his predictions. Pestilence, the minister of Divine vengeance, was laying waste that stiffnecked and luxurious people ; but the woe which he had foretold he was the foremost to alleviate. Heedless of his own safety, he raised the sick in his arms and bore them to the hospitals. He esteemed no time, or place, or office, too sacred for this work of mercy. Ships, colleges, churches, all at his bidding became so many lazarettos. Night and day he lived among the diseased and the dying, or quitted them only to beg food or medicine, from door to door, for their relief. For the moment, even China was forgotten ; nor would he advance a step, though he were to convert Christianity a third part of the human race, so long as one victim of the plague demanded his sympathy, or could be directed by him to an ever-present and still more compassionate Comforter. For the career of Xavier (though he knew it not) was now drawing to a close ; and with him the time was ripe for practising those deeper lessons of wisdom which he had imbibed from his long and arduous course of discipline.

With her cables bent lay the "Holy Cross" in the port of Malacca, ready at length to convey the embassy to China, when a

difficulty arose, which not even the prophetic spirit of Xavier had foreseen. Don Alvaro d'Alayde, the governor, a grandee of high rank, regarded the envoy and his commission with an evil eye. To represent the crown of Portugal to the greatest of earthly monarchs was, he thought, an honour more meet for a son of the house of Alayde, than for a man who had risen from the very dregs of the people. The expected emoluments also exceeded the decencies of a cupidity less than noble. He became of opinion that it was not for the advantage of the service of King John III. that the expedition should proceed. Pereyra appeared before him in the humble garb of a suitor, with the offer of 30,000 crowns as a bribe. All who sighed for the conversion, or for the commerce of China, lent the aid of their intercessions. Envoys, saints, and merchants united their prayers in vain. Brandishing his cane over their heads, Alvaro swore that, so long as he was governor of Malacca and captain-general of the seas of Portugal, the embassy should move no further. Week after week was thus consumed, and the season was fast wearing away, when Xavier at length resolved on a measure to be justified, even in his eyes, only by extreme necessity. A secret of high significance had been buried in his bosom since his departure from Europe. The time for the disclosure of it had come. He produced a Papal Brief, investing him with the dignity and the powers of apostolical nuncio in the East. One more hindrance to the conversion of China, and the Church would clothe her neck with thunders. Alvaro was still unmoved; and sentence of excommunication was solemnly pronounced against him and his abettors. Alvaro answered by sequestering the "Holy Cross" herself. Xavier wrote letters of complaint to the king. Alvaro intercepted them. One appeal was still open to the vicar of the vicar of Christ. Prostrate before the altar, he invoked the aid of Heaven; and rose with purposes confirmed and hopes reanimated. In the service of Alvaro, though no longer bearing the embassy to China, the "Holy Cross" was to be despatched to Sancian, an island near the mouth of the Canton river, to which the Portuguese were permitted to resort for trade. Xavier resolved to pursue his voyage so far, and thence proceed to Macao to preach the Gospel there. Imprisonment was sure to follow. But he should have Chinese fellow-prisoners. These at least he might convert; and though his life would pay the forfeit, he should leave behind him, in these first Christians, a band of missionaries who would propagate through their native land the faith which he might only be permitted to plant.

It was a compromise as welcome to Alvaro as to Xavier himself.

Again the "Holy Cross" prepared for sea; and the Apostle of the Indies, followed by a grateful and admiring people, passed through the gates of Malacca to the beach. Falling on his face on the earth, he poured forth a passionate, though silent, prayer. His body heaved and shook with the throes of that agonising hour. What might be the fearful portent none might divine, and none presumed to ask. A contagious terror passed from eye to eye, but every voice was hushed. It was as the calm preceding the first thunder-peal which is to rend the firmament. Xavier arose; his countenance no longer beaming with its accustomed grace and tenderness, but glowing with a sacred indignation, like that of Isaiah when breathing forth his inspired menaces against the King of Babylon. Standing on a rock amidst the waters, he loosed his shoes from off his feet, smote them against each other with vehement action, and then casting them from him, as still tainted with the dust of that devoted city, he leaped barefooted into the bark, which bore him away for ever from a place from which he had so long and vainly laboured to avert her impending doom.

She bore him, as he had projected, to the island of Sancian. It was a mere commercial factory; and the merchants who passed the trading season there vehemently opposed his design of penetrating further into China. True he had ventured into the forest there, against the tigers which infested it, with no other weapon than a vase of holy water; and the savage beasts, sprinkled with that sacred element, had for ever fled the place; but the Mandarins were fiercer still than they, and would avenge the preaching of the Saint on the inmates of the factory; though most guiltless of any design but that of adding to their heap of crowns and moidores. Long years had now passed away since the voice of Loyola had been heard on the banks of the Seine, urging the solemn inquiry, "What shall it profit?" But the words still rung on the ear of Xavier, and were still repeated, though in vain, to his worldly associates at Sancian. They sailed away with their cargoes, leaving behind them only the "Holy Cross," in charge of the officers of Alvaro, and depriving Xavier of all means of crossing the channel to Macao. They left him destitute of shelter and of food, but not of hope. He had heard that the King of Siam meditated an embassy to China for the following year; and to Siam he resolved to return in Alvaro's vessel; to join himself, if possible, to the Siamese envoys; and so at length to force his way into the empire.

But his earthly toils and projects were now to cease for ever. The angel of death appeared with a summons, for which, since death first entered our world, no man was ever more triumphantly prepared.

It found him on board the vessel on the point of departing for Siam. At his own request he was removed to the shore, that he might meet his end with the greater composure. Stretched on the naked beach, with the cold blasts of a Chinese winter aggravating his pains, he contended alone with the agonies of the fever which wasted his vital power. It was an agony and a solitude for which the happiest of the sons of men might well have exchanged the dearest society and the purest of the joys of life. It was an agony in which his still-uplifted crucifix reminded him of a far more awful woe endured for his deliverance. It was a solitude thronged by blessed ministers of peace and consolation, visible in all their bright and lovely aspects to the now unclouded eye of faith ; and audible to the dying martyr through the yielding bars of his mortal prison-house, in strains of exulting joy till then unheard and unimagined. Tears burst from his fading eyes, tears of an emotion too big for utterance. In the cold collapse of death his features were for a few brief moments irradiated as with the first beams of approaching glory. He raised himself on his crucifix ; and exclaiming, *In te, Domine, speravi—non confundar in æternum !* he bowed his head and died.

Why consume many words in delineating a character which can be disposed of in three ? Xavier was a fanatic, a Papist, and a Jesuit. Comprehensive and incontrovertible as the climax is, it yet does not exhaust the censures to which he is obnoxious. His understanding, that is, the mere cogitative faculty, was deficient in originality, in clearness, and in force. It is difficult to imagine a religious dogma which he would not have embraced, at the command of his teachers, with the same infantine credulity with which he received the legends and the creeds which they actually imposed upon him. His faith was not victorious over doubt ; for doubt never for one passing moment assailed it. Superstition might boast in him one of the most complete as well as one of the most illustrious of her conquests. She led him through a land peopled with visionary forms, and resounding with ideal voices—a land of prodigies and portents, of ineffable discourse and unearthly melodies. She bade him look on this fair world as on some dungeon unvisited by the breath of heaven ; and on the glorious face of nature, and the charms of social life, as so many snares and pitfalls for his feet. At her voice he starved and lacerated his body, and rivalled the meanest pauper in filth and wretchedness. Harder still, she sent him forth to establish among half-civilised tribes a worship which to them was but little more than a new idolatry ; and to inculcate a morality in which the more arduous virtues of the Christian life were made to yield precedence to ritual forms and outward ceremonies. And yet,

never did the polytheism of ancient or of modern Rome assign a seat among the demi-gods to a hero of nobler mould, or of a more exalted magnanimity, than Francis Xavier.

He lived among men as if to show how little the grandeur of the human soul depends on mere intellectual power. It was his to demonstrate with what vivific rays a heart imbued with the love of God and man may warm and kindle the nations, however dense may be the exhalations through which the giant pursues his course from the one end of heaven to the other. Scholars criticised, wits ridiculed, prudent men admonished, and kings opposed him ; but on moved Francis Xavier, borne forward by an impulse which crushed and scattered to the winds all such puny obstacles. In ten short years, as if mercy had lent him wings, and faith an impenetrable armour, he traversed oceans, islands, and continents, through a track equal to more than twice the circumference of our globe ; everywhere preaching, disputing, baptizing, and founding Christian churches. There is at least one well-authenticated miracle in Xavier's story. It is, that any mortal man should have sustained such toils as he did ; and have sustained them too, not merely with composure, but as if in obedience to some indestructible exigency of his nature. "The Father Master Francis" (the words are those of his associate, Melchior Nunez), "when labouring for the salvation of idolaters, seemed to act, not by any acquired power, but as by some natural instinct ; for he could neither take pleasure nor even exist except in such employments. They were his repose ; and when he was leading men to the knowledge and the love of God, however much he exerted himself, he never appeared to be making any effort."

Seven hundred thousand converts (for in these matters Xavier's eulogists are not parsimonious) are numbered as the fruits of his mission ; nor is the extravagance so extreme if the word "conversion" be understood in the sense in which they used it. Kings, rajahs, and princes were always, when possible, the first objects of his care. Some such conquests he certainly made ; and as the flocks would often follow their shepherds, and as the gate into the Christian fold was not made very strait, it may have been entered by many thousands and tens of thousands. But if Xavier taught the mighty of the earth, it was for the sake of the poor and miserable, and with them he chiefly dwelt. He dwelt with them on terms ill enough corresponding with the vulgar notions of a saint. "You, my friends," said he to a band of soldiers who had hidden their cards at his approach, "belong to no religious order, nor can you pass whole days in devotion. Amuse yourselves. To you it is not forbidden, if you neither cheat, quarrel, nor swear when you

play." Then good-humouredly sitting down in the midst of them, he challenged one of the party to a game at chess; and was found at the board by Don Diego Noragua, whose curiosity had brought him from far to see so holy a man, and to catch some fragments of that solemn discourse which must ever be flowing from his lips. The grandee would have died in the belief that the saint was a hypocrite, unless by good fortune he had afterwards (as we are told) chanced to break in on his retirement, and to find him there suspended between earth and heaven, in a rapture of devotion, with a halo of celestial glory encircling his head!

No mention will be found in the letters of Xavier of any such miraculous visitations, or of any other of the supernatural performances, ascribed to him by his Church. Such at least is the result of a careful examination of the whole of the five books into which his Epistles are divided. He was too humble a man to think it probable that he should be the depositary of so divine a gift; and too honest to advance any such claims to the admiration of mankind. Indeed he seems to have been amused with the facility with which his friends assented to these prodigies. Two of them repeated to him the tale of his having raised a dead child to life, and pressed him to reveal the truth. "What!" he replied, "I raise the dead! Can you really believe such a thing of a wretch like me?" Then smiling, he added, "They did indeed place before me a child. They said it was dead, which perhaps was not the case. I told him to get up, and he did so. Do you call that a miracle?" But in this matter Xavier was not allowed to judge for himself. He was a *Thaumaturgus* in his own despite; and this very denial is quoted by his admirers as a proof of his profound humility. Could he, by some second sight, have read the Bull of his own canonisation, he would doubtless, in defiance of his senses, have believed (for belief was always at his command) that the Church knew much better than he did, and that he had been reversing the laws of nature without perceiving it; for at the distance of rather more than half a century from his death, Pope Urban VIII., with the unanimous assent of all the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, in sacred conclave assembled, pledged his papal infallibility to the miracles already recorded, and to many more. And who will be so sceptical as to doubt their reality, when he is informed that depositions, taken in proof of them, were read before that august assembly; and that the apotheosis was opposed there by a learned person, who, as usual in such cases, appeared at their bar in the character, and with the title, of "the Devil's advocate"? A scoffer might indeed suggest that if the lawyer really laboured to refute falsehood, he

must have betrayed the interests of his clients ; and that the Father of Lies probably instructed his counsel to make a sham fight of it, in order that one lie the more might be established among men in the form of a new idol worship. Without exploring so dark a question, it may be seriously regretted that such old wives' fables have been permitted to sully the genuine history of so many men of whom the world was not worthy, and of none more than Francis Xavier. They have long obscured his real glory, and degraded him to the low level of a vulgar hero of ecclesiastical romance. Stripped of these puerile embellishments,—with no title to the homage due to genius and to learning,—and not included in the number of those who have aided the progress of speculative truth,—he emerges from those lower regions, clad with the mild brilliancy, and resplendent in the matchless beauty, which belong to the human nature, when ripening fast into a perfect union with the divine. He had attained to that childlike affiance in the Author of his being, which gives an unrestrained play to every blameless impulse, even when that awful presence is the most habitually felt. His was a sanctity which, at fitting seasons, could even disport itself in jests and trifling. No man, however abject his condition, disgusting his maladies, or hateful his crimes, ever turned to Xavier without learning that there was at least one human heart on which he might repose with all the confidence of a brother's love. To his eye the meanest and the lowest reflected the image of Him whom he followed and adored ; nor did he suppose that he could ever serve the Saviour of mankind so acceptably as by ministering to their sorrows, and recalling them into the way of peace. It is easy to smile at his visions, to detect his errors, to ridicule the extravagant austerities of his life, and even to show how much his misguided zeal eventually counteracted his own designs. But with our philosophy, our luxuries, and our wider experience, it is *not* easy for us to estimate or to comprehend the career of such a man. Between his thoughts and our thoughts there is but little in common. Of our wisdom he knew nothing, and would have despised it if he had. Philanthropy was his passion ; reckless daring his delight ; and faith, glowing in meridian splendour, the sunshine in which he walked. He judged or felt (and who shall say that he judged or felt erroneously ?) that the Church demanded an illustrious sacrifice, and that he was to be the victim ;—that a voice which had been dumb for fifteen centuries must at length be raised again, and that to him that voice had been imparted ;—that a new Apostle must go forth to break up the incrustations of man's long-hardened heart, and that to him that apostolate had been committed. So judging or so feeling, he obeyed

the summons of him whom he regarded as Christ's vicar on earth, and the echoes from no sublunary region, which the summons seemed to awaken in his bosom. In holding up to reverential admiration such self-sacrifices as his, slight, indeed, is the danger of stimulating an enthusiastic imitation. Enthusiasm! our pulpits distil their bland rhetoric against it; but where is it to be found? Do not our share markets, thronged even by the devout, overlay it—and our rich benefices extinguish it—and our pentecosts, in the dazzling month of May, dissipate it—and our stipendiary missions, and our mitres, decked, even in heathen lands, with jewels and with lordly titles—do they not, as so many lightning conductors, effectually divert it? There is indeed the lackadaisical enthusiasm of devotional experiences, and the sentimental enthusiasm of religious bazaars, and the oratorical enthusiasm of charitable platforms, and the tractarian enthusiasm of certain well-beneficed ascetics; but in what, except the name, do they resemble the “God-in-us” enthusiasm of Francis Xavier—of Xavier the magnanimous, the holy, and the gay; the canonised saint, not of Rome only, but of universal Christendom; who, if at this hour there remained not a solitary Christian to claim and to rejoice in his spiritual ancestry, should yet live in hallowed and everlasting remembrance, as the man who has bequeathed to these later ages, at once the clearest proof and the most illustrious example, that even amidst the enervating arts of our modern civilisation the apostolic energy may still burn with all its primæval ardour in the human soul, when animated and directed by a power more than human.

Xavier died in the year 1552, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and in the eleventh year of his absence from Europe. During his residence in the East, he had maintained a frequent correspondence with the General of his Order. Their letters breathe the tenderness which is one of the indispensable elements of the heroic character. But it was a grave though an intense affection, never degenerating into fondness, but chastened by filial reverence on the one side, and by parental authority on the other.

It was, indeed, as a father, or rather as a patriarch, exercising a supreme command over his family, and making laws for their future government, that Ignatius passed the last twenty years of his life. No longer a wanderer through the world, captivating or overawing the minds of men by marvels addressed to their imagination, he dwelt in the ecclesiastical capital of the West, giving form and substance to the visions which had first fallen upon him at the Mount of Ascension, and which had immovably abided with him through every succeeding pilgrimage.

Of the projects of his later days, the most cherished was that of training, at the Central College of the Jesuits at Rome, the pupils who were to propagate his society throughout the world. All languages and all sciences were taught there. The scholars contended with each other in public for literary honours, and exhibited before the learned and the great their skill in dramatic recitation. Such was the solicitude of Ignatius for their improvement, that he invited them to criticise his own colloquial Italian ; for, having acquired that language late in life, he spoke it imperfectly ; and was willing to compromise even his own habitual and well-sustained dignity, if so he might impress on his neophytes the importance of excelling in those vernacular tongues, by the use of which they were destined to encounter and rival their Protestant adversaries.

He was not, however, permitted to devote his declining years to such peaceful pursuits as these ; but yielded to the law which consigns to the life-long hostility of mankind every innovator who either breaks up their inveterate habits, or discredits their cherished maxims.

In Spain, Ignatius was assailed by Melchior Cano, a Dominican monk, by the Archbishop of Toledo, and by the Vicar-General of Saragossa ; all of whom appear to have braved his power, in the secret assurance of support from the Emperor Charles V. Melchior denounced the Jesuits and their General as impostors. Their influence, it is said, consigned him to an honourable banishment as Bishop of the Canaries. But he quickly resigned his mitre, and, resuming his invectives, continued them with impunity till death itself silenced him. The Archbishop launched against the new Order hot thunderbolts of interdicts and excommunications, as usurpers of his archiepiscopal privileges ; and, though Ignatius met the storm with papal briefs and edicts from the royal council, he was compelled to propitiate his powerful antagonist by humiliating submissions. Encouraged perhaps by this success of his neighbour, the Vicar-General of Saragossa brought into the field against the same enemies the same spiritual artillery of mandates and anathemas. Alarmed to find themselves thus cut off from all Christian offices, and from all the sacraments of the Church, the citizens first furiously drove away the Jesuits ; and then, with true popular consistency, as furiously drove away the Vicar-General and his clergy. The intrusive Order triumphed, and established themselves at Saragossa, both as ministers of religion, and as teachers of youth. It was a triumph doomed to a late, but lamentable expiation.

In France, Ignatius contended long and without success for the reception and settlement of his society. Though the Cardinal of

Lorraine was his advocate, and Henry II. issued letters-patent authorising the establishment of a Jesuit house and college in Paris, the Parliament refused to register the grant; and, when urged by the royal commands to obedience, opposed to them an angry remonstrance. The University seconded the Parliament. The Sorbonne promulgated a "conclusion" in their support. The Archbishop poured down a pitiless storm of declarations, prohibitions, and censures upon the heads of the suspected and unpopular Jesuits. Neither the King, the Cardinal, nor the General could make head against the thick flight of these ecclesiastical missiles. So the churchmen and the professors of Paris retained their monopoly of preaching and lecturing; the Jesuits taking refuge at St Germain, where, beyond the reach of the metropolitan jurisdiction, they waited the arrival of more propitious days.

In Portugal still more formidable disasters exercised the fortitude of Ignatius. Under the genial beams of royal favour, his institution had thriven but too luxuriantly in that kingdom, and was already exhibiting symptoms of corruption and decay. The Jesuit College at Coimbra was crowded with youths of family and fortune, who had rapidly degenerated into the lawless and self-indulgent habits of secular collegians. Rodriguez, the provincial of Portugal, a ruler of a gentle nature and too easy compliance, had been unable to restrain their petulance, or to punish their vices; and was displaced by the indignant General to make way for Miron, a man renowned for austerity, and endowed with an inflexible sternness. But the severities of Miron were followed by an open revolt of the students; and so formidable was their resistance, that even Ignatius was compelled to temporise. It was not, however, in his nature to make a permanent sacrifice of any part of his authority. He subjugated the rebels at length; but it was by a method which, at any other time, and in any other hands, might pass for the fabulous.

The rector of the college of Coimbra magnanimously resolved to make a public and painful expiation in his own person for the offences of his pupils. With his back and shoulders bare, and wielding in his hand a scourge, he traversed the city, inflicting on his naked back a succession of well-aimed and formidable stripes, and explaining to the astonished multitude the vicarious nature of this self-inflicted punishment. The example was of course irresistible. Other Jesuits quickly followed the rector, lashing themselves with emulous severity. The fascination spread. The refractory students themselves at length joined the expiatory procession, till they reached the college; where they arrived soundly whipped, excoriated, bleeding, and exhausted; and resolved never

more to provoke the mysterious power with which they had to do—a power which could thus, by an incomprehensible influence, compel their own wills to pronounce, and their own arms to execute, a sentence of shame and suffering, such as no other judge would have ventured to impose.

The great enchanter himself was now, however, to submit to the common doom. The spiritual sovereignty of which he was the architect had, in less than a quarter of a century, acquired an extension almost as great, and an establishment almost as firm, as that which the Papacy had gained by the unremitting labours of a thousand years. But, on the 30th of July, 1556, the strong man received the summons to render up his soul to him who gave it. He lingered till the following day and then died; but, strange to say, “unanointed, unannealed,” without the benediction of the Pope, or the sacraments of his Church. It is alleged by his friends that, in the spirit of obedience to his physician, he had postponed till too late the demand of these spiritual aids. His enemies exult over him as having betrayed, by this last act of indifference to the offices of religion, the latent infidelity and the secret falsehood of his life. The more charitable is incomparably the more probable hypothesis. They, however, who have studied Christianity in the life and the discourses of its divine Author, rather than in systems of dogmatic theology, will venture to believe that the acceptance of a dying man by his Maker depends on something infinitely higher and more holy than any priestly absolution or sacerdotal chrism.

Some unconscious love of power, a mind bewildered by many gross superstitions and many theoretical errors, and perhaps some tinge of insanity, may be justly ascribed to Ignatius Loyola. But no dispassionate student of his life will question his integrity, or deny him the praise of a devotion at once sincere, habitual, and profound. It is not to the glory of the Reformed to depreciate their greatest antagonist; or to think meanly of him, by whom, more than by any other man, the Reformation was stayed, and the Church of Rome rescued from her impending doom.

In the language now current amongst us, Ignatius might be described as the leader of the conservative, against the innovating spirit of his times. It was an age, as indeed is every era of great popular revolutions, when the impulsive or centrifugal forces which tend to isolate man, preponderating over the attractive or centripetal forces which tend to congregate him, had destroyed the balance of the social system. From amidst the controversies which then agitated the world had emerged two great truths, of which, after three hundred years' debate, we are yet to find the reconciliation. It was true

that the Christian Commonwealth ought to be one consentient body, united under one supreme head and bound together by a community of law, of doctrine, and of worship. It was also true that each member of that body was obliged for himself, on his own responsibility, and at his own peril, to render that worship, to ascertain that doctrine, to study that law, and to seek the guidance of that Supreme Ruler. Between these corporate duties and these individual obligations, there was a seeming contrariety. And yet the contradiction must be apparent only, and not real; for all truths must be consistent with each other. Here was a problem for the learned and the wise, for schools, and presses, and pulpits. But it is not by sages, nor in the spirit of philosophy, that such problems receive their practical solution. Wisdom may be the ultimate arbiter, but is seldom the immediate agent in human affairs. It is by antagonist passions, prejudices, and follies, that the equipoise of this most belligerent planet of ours is chiefly preserved in our own days; and so it was in the sixteenth century. If Papal Rome had her Brennus, she must also have her Camillus. From the camp of the invaders arose the war-cry of absolute mental independence; from the beleaguered host, the watchword of absolute spiritual obedience. The German pointed the way to that sacred solitude where, besides the worshipper himself, none may enter; the Spaniard to that innumerable company, which, with one accord, still chant the liturgies, and recite the creeds, of remotest generations. Chieftains in the most momentous warfare of which this earth had been the theatre since the subversion of Paganism, each was a rival worthy of the other in capacity, courage, disinterestedness, and the love of truth. And yet how marvellous the contrast!

Luther took to wife a nun. For thirty years together, Loyola never once looked on the female countenance. To overthrow the houses of the order to which he belonged, was the triumph of the reformer. To establish a new order on indestructible foundations, the glory of the saint. The career of the one was opened in the cell, and concluded amidst the cares of secular government. The course of life of the other, led him from a youth of camps and palaces to an old age of religious abstraction. Demons haunted both; but to the northern visionary they appeared as foul or malignant fiends, with whom he was to agonise in spiritual strife; to the southern dreamer, as angels of light marshalling his way to celestial blessedness. As best became his Teutonic honesty and singleness of heart, Luther aimed at no *perfection* but such as may consist with the everyday cares, and the common duties, and the innocent delights of our social existence; at once the foremost of heroes, and a very

man ; now oppressed with melancholy, and defying the powers of darkness, satanic or human ; then “rejoicing in gladness and thankfulness of heart for all his abundance ;” loving and beloved ; communing with the wife of his bosom ; prattling with his children ; surrendering his overburdened mind to the charms of music ; awake to every gentle voice, and to each cheerful aspect of nature or of art ; responding alike to every divine impulse and to every human feeling ; no chord unstrung in his spiritual or sensitive frame, but all blending together in harmonies as copious as the bounties of Providence, and as changeful as the vicissitudes of life. How remote from the “perfection” which Loyola proposed to himself, and which (unless we presume to distrust the Bulls by which he was beatified and canonised) we must suppose him to have attained ! Drawn by infallible, not less distinctly than by fallible limners, the portrait of the military priest of the Casa Professa possesses the cold dignity and the grace of sculpture ; but is wholly wanting in the mellow tones, the lights and shadows, the rich colouring, and the skilful composition of the sister art. There he stands apart from us mortal men, familiar with visions which he may not communicate, and with joys which he cannot impart. Severe in the midst of raptures, composed in the very agonies of pain ; a silent, austere, and solitary man ; with a heart formed for tenderness, yet mortifying even his best affections ; loving mankind as his brethren, and yet rejecting their sympathy : one while, a squalid, care-worn, self-lacerated pauper, tormenting his own senses that so he might rescue others from sensuality ; at another a monarch reigning in secluded majesty, that so he might become the benefactor of his race ; and then a legislator exacting, though with no selfish purposes, an obedience as submissive and as prompt as is due to the King of kings.

Heart and soul we are for the Protestant. He who will be wiser than his Maker is but seeming wise. He who will deaden one half of his nature to invigorate the other half will become at best a distorted prodigy. Dark as are the pages, and indistinct as is the character, in which the truth is inscribed, he who can decipher the roll will there read—that self-adoring pride is the head-spring of stoicism, whether in the heathen or in the Christian world. But there is a roll, neither dark nor ambiguous, in which the simplest and most ignorant may learn in what the “perfection” of our humanity really consists. Throughout the glorious profusion of didactic precepts, of pregnant apothegms, of lyric and choral songs, of institutes ecclesiastical and civil, of historical legends and biographies, of homilies and apologues, of prophetic menaces, of epistolary admonitions, and of positive laws, which crowd the inspired Canon, there

is still one consentient voice proclaiming to man, that the world within and the world without him were created for each other ; that his interior life must be sustained and nourished by intercourse with external things ; and that he then most nearly approaches to the "perfection" of his nature, when being most conversant with the joys and sorrows of life, and most affected by them, he is yet the best prepared to renounce the one or to endure the other, in a cheerful acquiescence in the will of Heaven.

Unalluring, and on the whole unlovely as it is, the image of Loyola must ever command the homage of the world. No other uninspired man, unaided by military or civil power, and making no appeal to the passions of the multitude, has had the genius to conceive, the courage to attempt, and the success to establish, a polity teeming with results at once so momentous and so distinctly anticipated. Amidst his ascetic follies, and his half-crazy visions, and, despite all the coarse daubing with which the miracle-mongers of his Church have defaced it, his character is destitute neither of sublimity nor of grace. They were men of no common stamp with whom he lived, and they regarded him with an unbounded reverence. On the anniversary of his death Baronius and Bellarmine met to worship at his tomb ; and there, with touching and unpremeditated eloquence, joined to celebrate his virtues. His successor Laynez was so well convinced that Loyola was beloved by the Deity above all other men, as to declare it impossible that any request of his should be refused. Xavier was wont to kneel when he wrote letters to him, to implore the Divine aid through the merits of his "holy Father Ignatius," and to carry about his autograph as a sacred relic. In popular estimation, the very house in which he once dwelt had been so hallowed by his presence, as to shake to the foundation, if thoughts unbecoming its purity found entrance into the mind of any inmate. Of his theopathy, as exhibited in his letters, in his recorded discourse, and in the precepts of his "Spiritual Exercises," it is perhaps difficult for the colder imaginations, and the Protestant reserve, of the North to form a correct estimate. Measured by such a standard, it must be pronounced irreverent and erotic ;—a libation on the altar at once too profuse and too little filtered from the dross of human passion. But to his fellow-men he was not merely benevolent, but compassionate, tolerant, and candid. However inflexible in exacting from his chosen followers an all-enduring constancy, he was gentle to others, especially to the young and the weak ; and would often make an amiable though awkward effort to promote their recreation. He was never heard to mention a fault or a crime, except to suggest an

apology for the offender. "Humbly to conceal humility, and to shun the praise of being humble," was the maxim and the habit of his later life ; and on that principle he maintained the unostentatious decencies of his rank as General of his order at the Casa Professa ; a convent which had been assigned for their residence at Rome. There he dwelt, conducting a correspondence more extensive and important than any which issued from the cabinets of Paris or Madrid. In sixteen years he had established twelve Jesuit Provinces in Europe, India, Africa, and Brazil ; and more than a hundred colleges or houses for the professed and the probationers, already amounting to many thousands. His missionaries had traversed every country, however remote and barbarous, which the enterprise of his age had opened to the merchants of Europe. The devout resorted to him for guidance, the miserable for relief, the wise for instruction, and the rulers of the earth for succour. Men felt that there had appeared among them one of those monarchs who reign in right of their own native supremacy ; and to whom the feeble wills of others must yield either a ready or a reluctant allegiance. It was a conviction recorded by his disciples on his tomb, in these memorable and significant words : "Whoever thou mayest be who has portrayed to thine own imagination Pompey, or Cæsar, or Alexander, open thine eyes to the truth, and let this marble teach thee how much greater a conqueror than they was Ignatius."

Whatever may have been the comparative majesty of the Cæsarian and the Ignatian conquests, it was true of either that, on the death of the conqueror, the succession to his diadem hung long in anxious suspense. Our tale descends from the sublime and the heroic to the region of ordinary motives and of ordinary men.

When Ignatius died, two of the most eminent of the original members of his order, Bobadilla and Laynez, were labouring under diseases supposed to be mortal. Laynez roused himself to issue a summons, requiring the attendance of the professed members at Rome, to make choice of a General. But Philip II., then at war with the papal court, rendered the election impossible, by detaining a majority of the Electoral College in Spain. Laynez, therefore, undertook the government of the society, with the rank and title of Vicar-General.

There are some bodily disorders for which promotion is a specific. Full of renovated life, the Vicar-General assumed all the powers of his great predecessor, and soon gave proof that they had fallen into no feeble hands. But neither was that a feeble grasp in which the keys of Peter were then held. Hot-headed and imperious as he was, Paul IV. had quailed in the solemn presence of Ignatius ; but

he believed that the time had now come for arresting the progress of a power which he had learnt rather to dread as the rival, than to respect as the guardian, of his own. To the succour of the Pope came Bobadilla ; who also shook off his illness that he might assume the guidance of a party among the professed Jesuits who were opposed to the advancement of Laynez to the office of General.

They commenced hostilities by preferring against him the charge of meditating an escape to Spain, with the view of conducting the election there, and of fixing the future seat and centre of the Jesuit power within the dominions of Philip ; where, exempt from papal control, they might give to the order whatever character and constitutions might best promote the greatness, and gratify the ambition, of the General. To defeat this project the Pope issued a mandate forbidding any Jesuit to quit the precincts of the city. Encouraged by this success, Bobadilla, a warm-hearted, impetuous man, who, even during the life of Ignatius, had protested against the severity of his rules and his demand of implicit obedience, now poured forth a series of vehement remonstrances against the supposed machinations of the Vicar-General. With a far more profound policy Laynez entrenched himself within an elaborate display of penitence, meekness, and humility. He confessed that it became him and his followers to atone, by self-inflicted penances, for the offence which it had seemed good to the Holy Father to impute to them. He was himself the first to lay publicly on his own shoulders severe and frequent stripes to expiate this fault. His meekness was such that he declined to return any answer to the harsh accusations of his antagonists. The laws of their order, indeed, required that the Vicar-General should impose *some* punishment on a subordinate who had advanced a complaint against his superior ; but so admirable was his mildness, that he subjected the bitterest of his assailants to no greater burthen than a single recital of the Paternoster and the Ave Maria.

Bobadilla and his adherents were no match for subtlety like this. They forgot of what inestimable price such exquisite lowliness must be in papal eyes. They overlooked the disfavour with which any resistance to any spiritual authority must always be regarded at the Vatican. They had the indiscretion to represent to the irritable pontiff that by punishing an appeal to himself by the infliction of any penance whatever, Laynez had violated the majesty of the Papal Crown, and infringed the privileges of all Christian people. "What, then, was the penance?" inquired the Cardinal Minister. "One Paternoster and one Ave Maria," was the reply. Indignation, contempt, and a pious horror at the feebleness of soul which could

murmur under such a trifle, repelled the unfortunate remonstrants from the presence of Paul. Laynez enjoyed the pleasure of having made them ridiculous. His gratification was not long afterwards completed by their exile to Assisi, there to perform far less tolerable exercises of penitence. They left the world of Rome for him to bustle in.

Peace with Spain returned ; and with it came the electors so long and anxiously expected. The entire chapter did not include more than twenty members. It was a lowly chamber in which they were convened, nor did a company less imposing in outward semblance meet together on that day within the compass of the seven hills. Yet scarcely had the Comitia, to whose shouts those hills had once re-echoed, ever conferred on consul or on prætor a power more real or more extensive than that which those homely men had now assembled to bestow. But before their choice of a General had been made, the doors of the conclave were thrown open, and Cardinal Pacheco appeared among them in the name of the Pope, and armed with his delegated authority. He had come (he said) not to control their proceedings, nor to restrain the free exercise of their electoral powers ; but merely to assert, by his presence, the high prerogative of his Holiness as the sovereign protector of the order. The votes were then collected. Laynez was announced as the new General of the Society ; and homilies, adorations, and thanksgivings celebrated his accession to office.

In the midst of this devotional harmony the voice of Pacheco was again heard. In the name of Paul he insisted, that, like other religious men, the Jesuits should thenceforward perform all the daily offices, choral and liturgical, of public worship. Ere the panic of this unwelcome mandate had subsided, the cardinal announced the further pleasure of the sovereign protector, that the tenure of the office of General should cease, not with his life, but at the end of some brief term, not exceeding three years. Each of these decisions was fatal to the great designs of Ignatius and his successor. The first would reduce their Society from their high calling, as champions of the Church, to the low level of any other order of monks. The second, by impairing all the energy of their monarchical constitution, would render them the mere vassals of the Pope, and subjugate them effectually to the papal power. To shake off these mandates, Laynez expostulated, reasoned, prayed. He was the most eloquent speaker of his times, but for once he spoke in vain. The immovable pontiff persisted, and actually inscribed on the constitutions of Ignatius two decrees for giving effect to these innovations. In a few months afterwards Paul IV. died ; when, despite

these solemn commands and their own still more solemn oaths of obedience, Laynez and his successors remained Generals for life; and neither chant nor anthem, psalm or liturgy, were ever afterwards permitted to prolong the sacred offices of the Order of Jesus. What are the limits which are implied in every vow of unlimited submission? When our own high churchmen were labouring a century and a half ago for the answer to that knotty question, they were perhaps unconscious that it had already vexed the ingenuity of Iago Laynez and his associates, without in any degree impeding their freedom.

The elevation of Laynez to the vacant throne of Ignatius was not accomplished without some sinister arts and some secular policy; but there is no reason to doubt that, in achieving that ascent, he was also guided by purer and more noble motives. In him, as in other men, antagonist principles not seldom enjoyed a divided triumph, and the testimonies to his virtues are such and so numerous as to command assent to their general truth. Eight of the twenty-four books of the history of Orlandinus are devoted to his administration of the affairs of the Jesuits. The reader of them willingly acknowledges that he possessed extraordinary abilities: and, half reluctantly, admits that he was scarcely less distinguished by genuine piety.

Laynez would seem to have been born to supply the intellectual deficiencies of Ignatius. He was familiar with the Greek and Latin tongues, with the whole compass of theological literature, and with all the moral sciences which in his age a theologian was required to cultivate. With these stores of knowledge he had made himself necessary to the founder of his order. Loyola consulted, employed, and trusted, but apparently did not like him. It is stated by Orlandinus that there was no other of his eminent followers whom the great patriarch of the society treated with such habitual rigour, while yet there was none who rendered him such important services.

The rigour with which Laynez was treated is well illustrated by his appointment to be Provincial of Italy, and to reside at Padua. As often as he had trained up in that city any promising recruit, the General withdrew the novice to Rome. Laynez complained of being thus deprived of the use of the instruments fashioned by himself. Ignatius answered, that it was right to congregate all the most effective sons of the society at Rome, because there was the seat and centre of their operations. Again Laynez remonstrated; and then Ignatius called on him to state what he thought the penance due to him for such contumacious importunity. The Provincial answered this stern question, as he says, with tears in his eyes. He proposed that he should be withdrawn from all share in the government of

the Order; that he should be deprived of all books, except his breviary; that he should beg his way to Rome; that there he should be employed in the most menial offices of the Casa Professa; or, if found unfit for them, in teaching grammar to little children; that, after passing through this penance for two or three years, he should undergo various scourgings, and a fast of four weeks' continuance; to all which most contrite suggestions, he added a promise that whenever again he should have occasion to write to his good father, he would abound in circumspection and in prayer.

This extraordinary course of penitential discipline was obviously recommended by Laynez only as a mode of expressing the profound reverence due to his General, and not with any real expectation that he would accept the proposal. Ignatius substituted for it a much wiser penance, by requiring Laynez to compose a theological work in refutation of the heretics. The General had looked deeply into the soul of his lieutenant. He saw that his too active and restless spirit was the real cause of his discontent at Padua, and judiciously prescribed the sedative of the desk.

The services rendered by Laynez to his superior are not less remarkable than the severity with which they were thus occasionally requited. "Do you not think," said Ignatius to him, "that the founders of the religious orders were inspired when they framed their constitutions?" "I do," was the answer, "so far as the general scheme and outline were concerned." Guided by this opinion, Loyola established a remarkable division of labour between himself and his follower. He, in the character of an inspired saint, took for his province the composing the text of the constitutions. To Laynez, as an uninspired scholar, he assigned the preparation of an authoritative comment. For himself, the lawgiver claimed the praise of having erected an edifice of which the plan and the arrangement were divine. To his fellow-labourer, he assigned the merit of having supported it by the solid foundation of a learning which, however excellent, was yet entirely human. An example will best explain the nature of this joint operation.

"In Theologiâ legetur vetus et novum Testamentum, et Doctrina Scholastica Divi Thomæ"—is the text. "Prælegetur etiam Magister Sententiarum, sed si videatur temporis decursu alius autor studentibus utilior futurus, ut si aliqua summa vel liber Theologiæ scholasticæ conficeretur qui nostris temporibus accommodatior videretur, prælegi poterit"—is the comment. Ignatius was content that the divine Thomas should be installed among the Jesuits as the permanent interpreter of the sacred oracles. Laynez, with deeper foresight, perceived that the day was coming when they must discover

a teacher "better suited to our times." It was a prediction which, shortly after his death, was fulfilled in the person of Molina, his own pupil.

To Laynez belongs the praise or the reproach of having revived, in modern times, the doctrine known in the Catholic Church as Molinist, in the Protestant Churches as Arminian. Our latest posterity will debate, as our remotest ancestry have debated, the truth of that doctrine. But that it was "*temporibus accommodator*," no one will deny. The times evidently required that the great antagonists of the Reformation should inculcate a belief more comprehensive and more flexible than that of Augustin or of Thomas. Much of the danger and disrepute to which the society was afterwards exposed, may, perhaps, be traced to those opinions. But much of the secret of their vitality and their strength must also be ascribed to the same cause.

Aided by these theological accomplishments, Laynez rendered to his General at the Council of Trent services still more important than those which he had performed as a commentator on the Ignatian constitutions. He was selected, with Salmeron for his associate, to represent the Papacy at that synod, so far as respected the exposition and defence of the doctrines of the see of Rome. Orlandinus has preserved the instructions addressed to these delegates by Loyola on the eve of their departure. They were to be deliberate in speaking, attentive in listening, and vigilant in seizing on the exact meaning of other speakers. They were admonished to avoid every appearance of dogmatism or prejudice, lest they should offend those whom it was their business to conciliate. In order to maintain their own serenity, they were to keep their seats when they spoke. They were to make frequent and regular visits to the hospitals, but not without alms to the patients; and in addressing them, they were to converse copiously, and with affection, laying aside the terse and circumspect style befitting their addresses to the council. They were to meet every morning to discuss the business of the day, in the course of which absolute unanimity amongst themselves would be indispensable; and twice on each day they were carefully to examine their own consciences.

Layneze and Salmeron appear to have conformed exactly to these wise admonitions. In the midst of the gorgeous assembly of princes, prelates, and ambassadors, they at first appeared in ostentatious meanness of apparel. They then, however, submitted to wear the better clothing presented to them by a much scandalised cardinal, that they might manifest a no less ostentatious indifference to the use or the neglect of so mean an external advantage. They had

joined the synod with purposes too magnificent and daring to leave their minds vacant for even a passing thought on matters so insignificant as these. For in the bosom of that most orthodox congregation, Laynez dared the reproach of heresy, and proclaimed opinions which, since the days of Augustin, had been branded as Pelagian.

Since the fall of the Roman Commonwealth the world had produced no such theatre for the exhibition of oratorical powers. Laynez is supposed not to have been constitutionally brave, but in the cathedral of Trent he bore himself with all the hardihood which unrivalled superiority in debate will impart to the least courageous. He asserted the freedom of the human will amidst outcries of indignation. He maintained the doctrines which, north of the Alps, are called ultramontane, although they were most unwelcome to the vast majority of his auditors. He vehemently opposed the admission of the laity to the cup, although it was the popular demand of more than half of Europe. He was strong in the consciousness of his dominion over those feelings to which a great speaker in a numerous assembly seldom appeals in vain. The very position from which he spoke proclaimed the pride, which becomes impressive only by assuming the disguise of humility. It was the place the most remote from the thrones of the papal legates, and the elevated chairs of the ambassadors of Christendom. But when he spoke those thrones and chairs were abandoned. Cardinals, bishops, counts, and abbots quitted their seats and thronged around him. Generals and doctors obeyed the same impulse; and, on one occasion, a circle more illustrious for rank and learning than had ever before surrounded the tribune of an orator, continued, during two successive hours, to reward his efforts by their profound and silent admiration.

On examining the only two of the speeches of Laynez which have been preserved by Orlandinus, it is difficult to detect the charm which thus seduced the haughtiest prelates into a passing forgetfulness of their dignity. His eloquence would appear to have been neither impassioned nor imaginative, nor of that intense earnestness which seems to despise the very rules by the observance of which it triumphs. Luminous argumentation, clothed in transparent language, and delivered with facility and grace, was probably the praise to which he was entitled—no vulgar praise indeed, for amidst the triumphs of oratory few are greater or more welcome than that of infusing order without fatigue into the chaotic thoughts of an inquisitive audience.

The health of Laynez sank beneath these efforts; and, if Orlan-

dinus may be believed, the deliberations of the fathers of Trent were suspended until he was able to resume his place among them. The fact seems very questionable ; but if Laynez received this high honour he was not long permitted to enjoy it. The march of the Protestants on Trent dispersed the council, and enabled him to exhibit his eloquence in a different and scarcely less memorable assembly.

Catherine de Medici had issued, in her son's name, citations to the leaders of the two religions to meet for their celebrated conference at Poissy, and Laynez was despatched to France to protest, in the name of the sovereign pontiff, against this assumption by a temporal prince of the right to convene a synod for the adjustment of spiritual questions. Nevertheless, Catherine and her son, and the princes of his blood, appeared on the appointed day at Poissy. Thither also came a long array of cardinals, of bishops, and of doctors. Theodore Beza and Peter Martyr were there, with ten other reformed ministers ; and there also appeared Laynez, armed cap-à-pie as a polemic, and clothed with all the dignities of a representative of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic See.

Among the memorable incidents of the debate which followed, was the bold apostrophe of Laynez to Catherine. He bade her remember that neither she nor any other secular monarch had any right to enter into compacts or negotiations with the enemies of the Church. "The smith," he exclaimed, "to his smithery. To the priesthood, and to them alone, are reserved all such questions as these." Catherine is said to have wept on receiving this public rebuke. If so, her tears were as unimpressive as those of Mary on the heart of Knox. "Catherine is an old acquaintance of mine," said Laynez afterwards to the Prince de Condé ; "she is an admirable actress, but will not deceive me."

In Beza he encountered an opponent more worthy of his powers. It had been alleged, in disproof of the real presence, that the image of anything was misplaced when the reality itself was there. Laynez answered that the type and anti-type might occasionally meet together ; as, for example, if, on the anniversary of a victory, the conqueror should exhibit the various military evolutions by which he had won the battle. With more smartness than reverence Beza rejoined, that the answer reduced the mass to a comedy, and made a comedian of Him whose presence there was asserted.

Much else, as little worthy of remembrance, passed between these learned combatants. Had Samuel Taylor Coleridge been present, how would he have deplored their unconsciousness of the great distinction between the reason and the understanding ! How elo-

quently would he have reminded them, that if men will join in the war of words without the same common intuitions, they may discharge their dialectics against each other till the day of doom without making any approach to the same common conclusions.

From Poissy Laynez retired to Trent. He resumed his seat in the council in the double character of Legate of the Pope and General of the Order of Jesus. These dignities seem to have a little impaired his former skill in the management of a popular assembly. Forgetting that the triumphs of pride are best won in the garb of lowliness, he engaged in an ill-timed and unsuccessful contest with the Generals of the monastic orders for precedence. But his defeat was solaced, not only by a high station on the episcopal bench, but by having appropriated to his use an elevated desk or pulpit, from which he might address the synod without danger that any member of it would be deprived of the delight of hearing him.

Laynez appears to have amply rewarded this homage. He was foremost in every debate, and the historians of the council ascribe to his eloquence two of the most remarkable decrees of the two last sessions. One of those decisions has very lately been invoked in the House of Commons as among the highest extant authorities in favour of the recent enactment, by which marriages not celebrated *in facie ecclesiæ* have been rendered as valid as though solemnised by a priest in holy orders. The council indeed determined that for the future the intervention of such a priest should be indispensable; but they prefaced this enactment by declaring that the former law of the Christian world had been otherwise, and that, until then, no ecclesiastical observances whatever had been necessary to render a matrimonial contract binding on the spouses, and sufficient for the legitimacy of their offspring.

To the eloquence of Laynez is to be ascribed this recognition of the general principle. With equal force and intrepidity he maintained that marriage is a right conferred upon mankind by the immediate gift of God himself—that no human authority is entitled to derogate from it even to the slightest extent—that therefore the Church herself could not lawfully restrain the use of this heaven-born franchise by any burthensome formality—and that to render sacerdotal interference indispensable to the exercise of it would be a mere usurpation and a lawless abuse of power. If the speaker had foreseen that at the distance of three centuries an heretical parliament would build on the foundation he was thus laying, or if that parliament had been aware that the foundations on which they built had been laid by a General of the Jesuits, which of the two would have been the more scandalised?

In the twenty-fifth and last session Laynez rendered an important service to his society, though with more credit to his address than to his candour. To abate the offence given to the world by the abuse of monastic vows of poverty, the council had decreed that the mendicant orders might hold temporal possessions in their corporate capacities. Two of the more zealous of those fraternities sued for and obtained the privilege of exclusion from this invidious franchise. Not to be eclipsed in pious ardour by any religious community, Laynez also solicited and obtained the boon that the Jesuits should continue to be bound by their self-denying renunciation of all worldly wealth. But (says Father Paul) with the return of day other thoughts returned; and, on the morrow, Laynez persuaded the council to reverse their sentence, so as to leave to his society the privilege of holding estates as a body corporate. "To possess the right and yet never to use it, would," he argued, "be praiseworthy in the sight of God. To be deprived of that right on their own petition, would, on the other hand, be praiseworthy in the sight of man. But how much better was it that they should enjoy the honour which cometh of God, than that honour which cometh of man only?" Is it wonderful that the words Jesuitical, and double-minded, so soon became synonymous?

The council was at length dissolved. Laynez returned to Rome, ruined in health, but possessing the highest esteem and gratitude of Pius IV., who then filled the papal throne. As an eminent expression of his favour, the Pope made a solemn visit to the General and the college of Jesuits, where he was received with discharges of compliments, literary, scientific, and philosophical, with which the reception of Elizabeth and James at our own universities will not bear a moment's comparison. For Laynez excelled most men not only in learning, but in the power of giving an impulse to the studies of the learned. Under his government the colleges and scholars of the Order had increased fourfold, and her associated members in a still greater proportion.

Laynez knew how to rule as well as how to teach. By firmness or by craft, he at once and for ever crushed the revolt of Bobadilla and his followers. By his energy he at once animated and controlled the operations of all the ministers of his power. He swayed it to the last, unaided by any colleague, and unawed by any rival; and even on his dying bed refused to name a vicar, or accept a coadjutor. He died in the year 1565, and in the fifty-second year of his age. His death was soothed with all the consolations of the last sacraments of his Church, and of a plenary indulgence from the Pope; and perhaps was not without the solace of remembering that

his life had been ceaselessly devoted to the duties prescribed by the laws of his society, and by the law of his own conscience.

Was that conscience itself a blind guide, perverted by low affections, and by unhallowed impulses? Who shall presume to answer? All hail to Rhadamanthus on his posthumous judgment-seat in the nether regions! But when Rhadamanthus comes above-ground, holds in his hand the historical pen, and resolves all the enigmas of hearts which ceased to beat long centuries ago, more confidently than most of us would dare to interpret the mysteries of our own, one wishes him back again at the confluence of Styx, Phlegethon, and Cocytus. It is, after all, nothing more than the surface of human character which the retrospective scrutiny of the keenest human eye is able to detect.

Ambition clothed in rags—subtlety under the guise of candour—timidity beneath the mask of audacious eloquence—these are the offences laid to the charge of Iago Laynez. Yet a priest who, in the sixteenth century, refused the purple, must have had aspirations for something higher than worldly honours. Hypocrisy is the charge which every one must bear who has to do with enemies incredulous of all virtue superior to their own. And cowardice is a reproach never to be escaped by him who, being debarred from the use of all weapons but the tongue, knows how to render that weapon terrible to his opponents. The historical portraiture which exhibits Laynez as ambitious, crafty, and timid, may be a correct likeness; but no one who considers how confused are the lights by which we must now examine it, will peremptorily declare that the resemblance is accurate.

Gifted with extraordinary talents, flexible address, profound learning, and captivating eloquence, Laynez fell short of that standard at which alone the name of any man may be inscribed on the roll sacred to those who have reigned over their fellow-mortals by a right divine, inherent, and indefeasible. Without the genius to devise or the glowing passion to achieve great things, none may take his place with those kings of the earth on whose brows Nature herself has set the diadem. Far surpassing, in mere intellectual resources, both Ignatius and Xavier, the fiery element native to their souls was uninhabitable by his. But though his hands could not grasp their weapons, he wielded his own with admirable skill and efficacy. To Laynez his society were first indebted for their characteristic theology, for the possession and the fame of learning, for a more intimate alliance with the Papacy, and for the more pronounced hostility of the Reformers. He first established for them that authority in the cabinets of Europe, on which, at no distant time, the edifice of

their temporal power was to rest. It was his melancholy distinction to number among these royal disciples the infamous Catherine, and her less odious, because feebler son. He was associated with them at the time when they were revolving the greatest crime with which the annals of Christendom have been polluted. His memory is, however, unstained with the guilt of that massacre, except so far as the doctrines he inculcated in the conference at Poissy may have induced the sovereigns to think lightly of any bloodshed which should rid the world of a party which he taught them to regard as abhorred of God, and as hateful to the enlightened eye of man.

It is more easy to discern the intellectual than the moral greatness of Laynez. He was the earliest, if not the most eminent example of the natural results of Loyola's discipline. His character illustrates the effect of concentrating all the interests of life, and all the affections of the heart, within the narrow circle of one contracted fellowship. It yielded in him, as it has produced in others, a vigorous but a stunted development of the moral faculties—a kind of social selfishness and sectional virtue—a subordination of philanthropy to the love of caste—a spirit irreclaimably servile, because exulting in its own servitude—a temper consistent indeed with great actions, and often contributing to them, but destructive (at least in ordinary minds) of that free and cordial sympathy with man as man, of those careless graces and of that majestic repose, which touch and captivate the heart in Him whose name the Order of the Jesuits had assumed, and to which must in part, at least, be ascribed the sacred fascination exercised over us all by the simple records of his life and language.

On the 2nd of July, 1565, the Casa Professa, usually the scene of a profound stillness, was agitated by an unwonted excitement. Men of austere demeanour might be seen there clasping each other's hands, and voices habitually mute were interchanging hearty congratulations. One alone appeared to take no share in the common joy. As if overpowered by some strange and unwelcome tidings, he seemed by imploring gestures to deprecate a decision against which his paralysed lips in vain attempted to protest. His age might be nearly sixty, his dress mean and sordid, and toil or suffering had ploughed their furrows in his pallid cheek; but he balanced his tall and still graceful figure with a soldier's freedom, and gazed on his associates with a countenance cast in that mould which ladies love and artists emulate. They called him Father Francis; and, on the death of Laynez, their almost unanimous suffrage had just hailed him as the third General of the Order of Jesus. The wish for rank and power was never more sincerely disclaimed; for never had they

been forced on any one who had a larger experience of their vanity.

In the female line Father Francis was the grandson of Ferdinand of Arragon, and therefore the near kinsman of the Emperor Charles V. Among his paternal ancestry he could boast or lament the names of Alexander VI. and of Cæsar Borgia. Of that house, eminent alike for their wealth, their honours, and their crimes, he was the lineal representative; and had, in early manhood, inherited from his father the patrimony and the title of the Dukes of Gandia.

Don Francis Borgia, as if to rescue the name he bore from the infamy of his progenitors, exhaled, even in his childish days, the odour of sanctity. With each returning month, he cast a lot to determine which he should personate of the saints with whose names it was studded on the calendar. In his tenth year, with a virtue unsung and unconceived by the *Musæ Etonenses*, he played at saints so perfectly as to inflict a vigorous chastisement on his own naked person. It is hard to resist the wish that the scourge had been yet more resolutely wielded by the arm of his tutor. So seems to have thought his maternal uncle, Don John of Arragon, Archbishop of Saragossa. Taking the charge of his nephew, that high-born prelate compelled him to study alternately the lessons of the riding-master and those of the master of the sentences; and in his nineteenth year sent him to complete his education at the court of his imperial cousin.

Ardent as were still the aspirations of the young courtier for the monastic life, no one in that gallant circle bore himself more bravely in the *ménage*, or sheathed his sword with a steadier hand in the throat of the half-maddened bull, or more skilfully disputed with his sovereign the honours of the tournament. As the youthful knight, bowing to the saddle-tree, lowered his spear before the "Queen of Beauty," many a full dark eye beamed with a deeper lustre; but his triumph was incomplete and worthless unless it won the approving smile of Eleonora de Castro. That smile was not often refused. But the romance of Don Francis begins where other romances terminate. Foremost in the train of Charles and Isabella, the husband of the fair Eleonora still touched his lute with unrivalled skill in the halls of the Escorial, or followed the quarry across the plains of Castile in advance of the most ardent falconer. Yet that music was universally selected from the offices of the Church; and in the very agony of the chase, just as the wheeling hawk paused for his last deadly plunge, (genius of Nimrod, listen!) he would avert his eyes and ride slowly home, the inventor of a matchless effort of penitential self-denial.

With Charles himself for his fellow-pupil, Don Francis studied the arts of war and fortification under the once celebrated Sainte Croix, and practised in Africa the lessons he had been taught ;—earning the double praise, that in the camp he was the most magnificent, in the field the most adventurous, of all the leaders in that vaunted expedition. At the head of a troop enlisted and maintained by himself, he attended the Emperor to the Milanese and Provence ; and, in honourable acknowledgment of his services, was selected by Charles to lay a report of the campaign before the Empress in person, at Segovia. Towards her he felt an almost filial regard. She had long been the zealous patron and the cordial friend of himself and of Eleonora ; and at the public festivals, which celebrated at once the victories of Charles and the meeting of the States of Castile at Toledo, they shone among the most brilliant of the satellites by which her throne was encircled.

At the moment of triumph the inexorable arm was unbarred which so often, as in mockery of human pomp, confounds together the world's bravest pageants and the humiliations of the grave. Dust to dust and ashes to ashes ! but, when the imperial fall, not without one last poor assertion of their departed dignity. Isabella might not be laid in the sepulchre of the Kings of Spain until, amidst the funeral rites, the soldered coffin had been opened, the cerements removed, and some grandee of the highest rank had been enabled to depose that he had seen within them the very body of the deceased sovereign. Such, in pursuance of an ancient custom, was the duty confided to the zeal of Don Francis Borgia ; nor was any one better fitted for such a trust. The eye, now for ever closed, had never turned to him but with maternal kindness, and every lineament of that serene and once eloquent countenance was indelibly engraven on his memory. Amidst the half-uttered prayers which commended her soul to the Divine mercy, and the low dirge of the organ, he advanced with streaming eyes, and reverently raised the covering which concealed the secrets of the grave ; when—but why or how portray the appalling and loathsome spectacle ? That gentle brow, that eloquent countenance, that form so lately reposing on earth's proudest throne, and extolled with an almost adoring homage !—Don Francis turned from the sight to shudder and to pray.

It was the great epoch in the life of Borgia. In the eyes of the world, indeed, he may have been unchanged ; but in his eyes the whole aspect of that world was altered. Lord of a princely fortune, the heir of an illustrious house, the favourite kinsman of the Emperor of the West, renowned in the very flower of his youth as a warrior, a courtier, and a musician, his home hallowed by conjugal

love, and gladdened by the sports of his children ; for whom had life a deeper interest, or who could erect on a surer basis a loftier fabric of more brilliant hopes ? Those interests and hopes he deliberately resigned, and, at the age of twenty-nine, bound himself by a solemn vow, that, in the event of his surviving Eleonora, he would end his days as a member of some religious order. He had gazed on the hideous triumph of death and sin over prospects still more splendid than his own. For him the soothing illusions of existence were no more—earth and its inhabitants, withering under the curse of their Maker, might put on their empty gauds, and for some transient hour dream and talk of happiness. But the curse was there, and there would it lie, crushing the frivolous spirit the most when felt the least, and consigning alike to that foul debasement the lovely and the brave ; the sylph now floating through the giddy dance, and the warrior now proudly treading the field of victory.

From such meditations Charles endeavoured to recall his friend to the common duties of life. He required him to assume the viceroyalty of Catalonia, and adorned him with the cross of the order of Saint James of Compostella, then among the noblest and the most highly prized of all chivalric honours. His administration was firm, munificent, and just ; it forms the highest era of his life, and is especially signalised by the same sedulous care for the education of the young which afterwards formed his highest praise as General of the Order of Jesus.

Ingenuous above all men in mortifying his natural affections, Don Francis could not neglect the occasion which his new dignities afforded him, of incurring much wholesome contumely. Sumptuous banquets must be given in honour of his sovereign ; when he could at once fast and be despised for fasting. To exhibit himself in penitential abasement before the people under his authority, would give to penitence the appropriate accompaniment of general contempt. On the festival of “the Invention of the Holy Cross,” mysteries, not unlike those of the *Bona Dea*, were to be celebrated by the ladies of Barcelona ; when, to prevent the profane intrusion of any of the coarser sex, the viceroy himself undertook the office of sentinel. With a naked dagger in his hand, a young nobleman demanded entrance, addressing to the viceroy insults such as every gentleman is bound, under the heaviest penalty of the laws of chivalry, to expiate by blood. A braver man did not tread the soil of Spain than Don Francis, nor any one to whom the reproach of poltroonery was more hateful. And yet his sword did not leap from his scabbard. With a calm rebuke, and courteous demeanour, he allowed the bravo to enter the sacred precincts—preferring the

imputation of cowardice, though stinging like an adder, to the sin of avenging himself, and, indeed, to the duty of maintaining his lawful authority. History has omitted to tell what were the weapons, or what the incantation, by which the ladies promptly ejected the insolent intruder ; nor has she recorded how they afterwards received their guardian knight of St Iago. Her only care has been to excite our admiration for this most illustrious victory, in the bosom of Don Francis, of the meekness of the saint over the human passions of the soldier.

At the end of four years, Don Francis was relieved by the death of his father from his viceregal office, and assumed his hereditary title of Duke of Gandia. His vassals exulted in the munificence of their new chief. The ancient retainers of his family lived on his bounty — cottages, convents, and hospitals, rose on his estates — fortresses were built to check the ravages of the Moorish corsairs, and the mansion of his ancestors reappeared in all its ancient splendour. In every work of piety and mercy the wise and gentle Eleonora was the rival of her lord. But it was the only strife which ever agitated the Castle of Gandia. Austerities were practised there, but gloom and lassitude were unknown ; nor did the bright suns of Spain gild any feudal ramparts, within which Love, and Peace, the child of Love, shed their milder light with a more abiding radiance.

But on that countenance, hitherto so calm and so submissive, might at length be traced the movements of an inward tempest, which, even when prostrate before the altar, the Duke of Gandia strove in vain to tranquillise. Though conversant with every form of self-inflicted suffering, how should he find strength to endure the impending death of Eleonora ! His was a prayer transcending the resources of language and of thought ; it was the mute agony of a breaking heart. But after the whirlwind and the fire was heard the still small voice. It said to him, or seemed to say, “ If it be thy deliberate wish, she *shall* recover ; but it will not be for her real welfare, nor for thine.” Adoring gratitude swept away every feebler emotion, and the suppliant’s grief at length found utterance. “ Thy will be done. Thou knowest what is best for us. Whom have we in heaven but Thee, and whom upon earth should we desire in comparison of Thee ? ” At the age of thirty-six the Duke of Gandia committed to the tomb the frame at once animated by a spirit from which not death itself could separate him. In the sacred retirement to which, in that event, he had devoted his remaining days, Eleonora would still unite her prayers to his ; and as each of those days should decline into the welcome shadows of evening, one stage the more towards his reunion with her would have been traversed.

The Castle of Gandia was still hung with the funeral draperies when a welcome though unexpected guest arrived there. It was Peter Faber, the officiating priest at the Crypt of Montmartre, charged by Ignatius with a mission to promote the cause of Christian education in Spain. Aided by his counsels, and by the letters of the patriarch, the Duke erected on his estate a church, a college, and a library, and placed them under the care of teachers selected by Ignatius. The sorrows of the Duke were relieved as his wealth flowed still more copiously in this new channel of beneficence ; and the universities of Alcalá and Seville were enlarged by his bounty with similar foundations. But, as Faber remarked, a still nobler edifice was yet to be erected on the soul of the founder himself. The first stone of it was laid in the Duke's performance of the Spiritual Exercises. To the completion of this invisible but imperishable building, the remainder of his life was inflexibly devoted.

With Ignatius the Duke had long maintained a correspondence, in which the stately courtesies of Spanish noblemen not ungracefully temper the severer tones of patriarchal authority and filial reverence. Admission into the Order of Jesus was an honour for which, in this case, the aspirant was humbly content, and was wisely permitted, long to wait and sue. To study the biography, that he might imitate the life, of Him by whose holy name the Society was called ; to preach in his own household, or at the wicket of the nunnery of the ladies of St Clair ; and day by day, to place in humiliating contrast some proof of the Divine goodness and some proof of his own demerit ; were the first probationary steps which the Duke was required to tread in the toilsome path on which he had thus entered. It was a path from which Philip, then governing Spain with the title of Regent, would have willingly seduced him. He consulted him on the most critical affairs ; summoned him to take a high station in the States of Castile ; and pressed on his acceptance the office of grand master of the royal household. It was declined in favour of the Duke of Alva. Had Gandia preferred the duties of his secular rank to his religious aspirations, Spain might have had a saint the less and seven provinces the more. With the elevation of Alva, the butcheries in the Netherlands, the disgrace of Spain, and the independence of Holland, might have been averted.

Warned by his escape, the Duke implored with renewed earnestness his immediate admission into the order ; nor was Ignatius willing that his proselyte should again incur such dangers. At the chapel of his own college he accordingly pronounced the irrevocable vows ; a Papal bull having dispensed, during a term of four years,

with any public avowal of the change. They were passed in the final adjustment of his secular affairs. He had lived in the splendour appropriate to his rank and fortune, and in the exercise of the bounty becoming his eminence in the Christian commonwealth. But now all was to be abandoned, even the means of almsgiving; for he was himself henceforth to live on the alms of others. He gave his children in marriage to the noblest houses in Spain and Portugal, transferred to his eldest son the enjoyment of the patrimonial estates of Gandia, and then, at the age of forty, meekly betook himself to the study of scholastic divinity, of the traditions of the Church, and of the canons of the general councils. He even submitted to all the rules, and performed all the public exercises enforced on the youngest student. Such was his piety, that the thorny fagots of the schoolmen fed instead of smothering the flame; and on the margin of his Thomas Aquinas might be seen some devout aspiration, extracted by his sacred alchemy from each subtle distinction in the text. Never before or since was the degree of Doctor in Divinity, to which he now proceeded, so hardly earned or so well deserved.

Two of the brothers of the Duke had been members of the sacred college, and his humility had refused for two of his sons the purple offered to them at the instance of the Emperor. But how should the new doctor avert from his own head the ecclesiastical cap of maintenance with which Charles was now desirous to replace the ducal coronet? He fled the presence of his imperial patron, made and executed his own testamentary dispositions, delivered his last parental charge to his eldest son, and bade a final adieu to his weeping family. The gates of the Castle of Gandia closed on their self-banished lord. He went forth, like Francis Xavier, chanting the song of David—"When Israel went out of Egypt, and the House of Jacob from a strange people;"—but adding, from another strain of the royal minstrel, the exulting words, "Our bonds are broken and we are delivered." He lived for more than twenty years from this time, and in his future missions into Spain often passed the gates of the castle, but never more re-entered them. He became a stranger even to his children, never again passing so much as a single day in their society, or even permitting himself to become acquainted with their offspring.

As the bird set free to her nest, so hastened the emancipated Duke to take his seat at the footstool of Ignatius. Yet, in his route through Ferrara and Florence, his sacred impatience was arrested, and his humility confirmed, by the unwelcome honours yielded to

him by his kinsmen, the reigning sovereigns of those duchies. He would have entered Rome by night; but, in the city of triumphs and ovations, the victorious Loyola could not but desire to exhibit so illustrious a conquest. Attended by the Ambassador of Spain, by a prince of the house of Colonna, and by a long train of cardinals, priests, and nobles, the Duke of Gandia advanced in solemn procession to the Casa Professa. There, in the presence of his General, his wearied spirit found at length the repose which the most profuse liberality of fortune had been unable to bestow. With tears of joy he kissed the feet of the patriarch and of his professed brethren, esteeming the meanest office in their household an honour too exalted for so unworthy an associate; and then, in a general confession, poured into the ear of Ignatius every secret of his conscience from the dawn of life to that long-desired hour.

Such zeal was a treasure too precious to be left without some great and definite object; and as the Duke was still the steward of some of this world's treasures, which he had devoted to sacred uses, they were employed in building at Rome the church and college afterwards so famous as the *College de Propaganda Fide*. One only secular care still awaited him. His rank as a grandee of Spain, and the cross of St Iago, could not be laid aside without the consent of the Emperor. It was solicited with all the grace of an accomplished courtier, and all the fervour of a saint. But while he awaited at Rome the answer of Charles, a new alarm disturbed the serenity of the Casa Professa. The dreaded purple was again pressed on him with all the weight of Papal admonition. To avoid it, Gandia fled the presence of the Pope and of Ignatius, returned to Spain, performed a pilgrimage to the Castle of Loyola, kissed the hallowed ground, and then burying himself in a Jesuit College at Ognato, once more awaited the decision of the Emperor.

It soon arrived. He was no longer a duke, a knight of St Iago, nor even a Spanish gentleman. Solemnly and in due legal form, he renounced all these titles, and with them all his property and territorial rights. Even his secular dress was laid aside, and his head was prepared by the tonsure for the episcopal touch, emblematic of the most awful mystery. The astonished spectators collected and preserved the holy relics. And now, bent in lowly prostration before the altar at Ognato, the Father Francis had no further sacrifice to offer there, but the sacrifice of a heart emptied of all the interests and of all the affections of the world. Long and silent was his prayer, but it was unattended with any trace of disorder. The tears he shed were such as might have bedewed the cheek of

the First Man before he had tasted the bitterness of sin. He rose from his knees, bade a last farewell to his attendants; and Father Francis was left alone with his Creator.

It was a solitude not long to be maintained. The fame of his devotion filled the Peninsula. All who needed spiritual counsel, and all who wished to indulge an idle curiosity, resorted to his cell. Kings sought his advice, wondering congregations hung on his lips, and two at least of the grandees of Spain imitated his example. His spiritual triumphs were daily more and more splendid; and, if he might escape the still threatened promotion into the College of Cardinals, might be as enduring as his life. The authority of Ignatius, not unaided by some equivocal exercise of his ingenuity, at length placed Father Francis beyond the reach of this last danger. They both went down to the grave without witnessing the debasement of their Order by any ecclesiastical dignity.

But there was yet one tie to the pomp and vanity of this world which could not be entirely broken. During his viceregal administration, Father Francis had on one occasion traversed the halls of the Castle of Barcelona in deep and secret conference with his imperial cousin. Each at that interview imparted to the other his design of devoting to religious retirement the interval which should intervene between the business and the close of life. At every season of disappointment Charles reverted to this purpose, and abandoned or postponed it with each return of success. But now, broken with sickness and sorrow, he had fixed his residence in a monastery in Estremadura, and summoned the former viceroy of Catalonia to the presence of his early friend and patron. Falling on his knees, as in times of yore, Father Francis offered to impress the kiss of homage on the hand which had so lately borne the sceptre of half the civilised world. But Charles embraced his cousin, and compelled him to sit, and to sit covered, by his side. Long and frequent were their conversations; but the record of them transmitted to us by the historians of the Order of Jesus, has but little semblance of authenticity. Charles is made to assail, and Borgia to defend the new institute, and the imperial disputant of course yields to the combined force of eloquence and truth. It seems less improbable that the publication of *Memoirs of the Life of the Emperor*, to be written by himself, was one subject of serious debate at these interviews, and that the good father dissuaded it. If the tale be true, he has certainly one claim the less to the gratitude of later times. What seems certain is, that he undertook and executed some secret mission from Charles to the court of Portugal, that he acted as one of the executors of his will, and delivered a

funeral oration in praise of the deceased emperor before the Spanish court at Valladolid.

From this point the life of Borgia merges in the general history of the Order to which he had attached himself. It is a passage of history full of the miracles of self-denial, and of miracles in the more accurate acceptation of the word. To advance the cause of education, and to place in the hands of his own Society the control of that mighty engine, was the labour which Father Francis, as their General, chiefly proposed to himself. His success was complete, and he lived to see the establishment, in almost every state of Europe, of colleges formed on the model of that which he had himself formed in the town of Gandia.

Borgia is celebrated by his admirers as the most illustrious of all conquerors of the appetites and passions of our common nature; and the praise, such as it is, may well be conceded to him. No other saint in the calendar ever renounced or declined so great an amount of worldly grandeur and domestic happiness. No other embraced poverty and pain in forms more squalid, or more revolting to the flesh and blood. So strange and shocking are the stories of his flagellations, of the diseases contracted by them, and of the sickening practices by which he tormented his senses, that even to read them is of itself no light penance. In the same spirit, our applause is demanded for feats of humility, and prodigies of obedience, and raptures of devotion, so extravagant, that his biographers might seem to have assumed the office of penitential executors to the saint; and to challenge for his memory some of the disgust and contempt which when living he so studiously courted. And yet Borgia was no ordinary man.

He had great talents with a narrow capacity. Under the control of minds more comprehensive than his own, he could adopt and execute their wider views with admirable address and vigour. With rare powers both of endurance and of action, he was the prey of a constitutional melancholy, which made him dependent on the more sanguine spirit of his guides for all his aims and for all his hopes; but once rescued from the agony of selecting his path, he moved along it, not merely with firmness, but with impetuosity. All his impulses came from without; but when once given, they could not readily be arrested. The very dejection and self-distrust of his nature rendered him more liable than other men to impressions at once deep and abiding. Thus he was a saint in his infancy at the bidding of his nurse—then a cavalier at the command of his uncle—an inamorato because the empress desired it—a warrior and a viceroy because such was the pleasure of Charles—a devotee from

seeing a corpse in a state of decomposition—a founder of colleges on the advice of Peter Faber—a Jesuit at the will of Ignatius—and General of the Order because his colleagues would have it so. Yet each of these characters, when once assumed, was performed, not merely with constancy, but with high and just applause. His mind was like a sycophant plant, feeble when alone, but of admirable vigour and luxuriance when properly sustained. A whole creation of such men would have been unequal to the work of Ignatius Loyola; but, in his grasp, one such man could perform a splendid though but a secondary service. His life was more eloquent than all the homilies of Chrysostom. Descending from one of the most brilliant heights of human prosperity, he exhibited everywhere, and in an aspect the most intelligible and impressive to his contemporaries, the awful power of the principles by which he was impelled. Had he lived in the times and in the society of his infamous kinsmen, Borgia would not improbably have shared their disastrous renown. But his dependent nature, moulded by a far different influence, rendered him a canonised saint; an honourable, just, and virtuous man; one of the most eminent ministers of a polity as benevolent in intention as it was gigantic in design; and the founder of a system of education pregnant with results of almost matchless importance. His miracles may be not disadvantageously compared with those of the Baron Munchausen; but it would be less easy to find a meet comparison for his genuine virtues. They triumph over all the silly legends and all the real follies which obscure his character. His whole mature life was but one protracted martyrdom, for the advancement of what he esteemed the perfection of his own nature, and the highest interests of his fellow-men. Though he maintained an intimate personal intercourse with Charles IX. and his mother, and enjoyed their highest favour, there is no reason to suppose that he was entrusted with their atrocious secret. Even in the land of the Inquisition he had firmly refused to lend the influence of his name to that sanguinary tribunal; for there was nothing morose in his fanaticism, nor mean in his subservience. Such a man as Francis Borgia could hardly become a persecutor. His own Church raised altars to his name. Other Churches have neglected or despised it. In that all-wise and all-compassionate judgment, which is uninvaded by our narrow prejudices and by our unhallowed feelings, his fervent love of God and of man was doubtless permitted to cover the multitude of his theoretical errors and real extravagances. Human justice is severe not merely because man is censorious, but because he reasonably distrusts himself, and fears lest his weakness should confound the distinctions of good and

evil. Divine justice is lenient, because there alone love can flow in all its unfathomable depths and boundless expansion—impeded by no dread of error, and diverted by no misplaced sympathies.

To Ignatius, the founder of the Order of the Jesuits; to Xavier, the great leader in their missionary enterprises; to Laynez, the author of their peculiar system of theology; and to Borgia, the architect of their system of education, two names are to be added to complete the roll of the great men from whose hands their Institute received the form it retains to the present hour. These are Bellarmine, from whom they learned the arts and resources of controversy; and Acquaviva, the fifth in number, but in effect the fourth of their Generals—who may be described as the Numa Pompilius of the Order. There is in the early life of Bellarmine a kind of pastoral beauty, and even in his later days a grace, and a simplicity so winning, that it costs some effort to leave such a theme unattempted. The character of Acquaviva, one of the most memorable rulers and lawgivers of his age, it would be a still greater effort to attempt.

“Henceforth let no man say” (to mount on the stilts of dear old Samuel Johnson), “Come, I will write a disquisition on the history, the doctrines, and the morality of the Jesuits”—at least let no man say so who has not subdued the lust of story-telling. Filled to their utmost limits, lie before us the sheets so recently destined to that ambitious enterprise. Perhaps it may be as well thus to have yielded to the allurements which have marred the original design. If in later days the disciples of Ignatius, obeying the laws of all human institutions, have exhibited the sure, though slow, development of the seeds of error and of crime, sown by the authors of their polity, it must at least be admitted that they were men of no common mould. It is something to know that an impulse, which, after three centuries, is still unspent, proceeded from hands of gigantic power, and that their power was moral as much as intellectual, or much more so. In our own times much indignation and much alarm are thrown away on innovators of a very different stamp. From the ascetics of the common room, from men whose courage rises high enough only to hint at their unpopular opinions, and whose belligerent passions soar at nothing more daring than to worry some unfortunate professor, it is almost ludicrous to fear any great movement on the theatre of human affairs. When we see these dainty gentlemen in rags, and hear of them from the snows of the Himalaya, we may begin to tremble.

The slave of his own appetites, in bondage to conventional laws, his spirit emasculated by the indulgences or corroded by the cares

of life, hardly daring to act, to speak, or to think for himself, man—gregarious and idolatrous man—worships the world in which he lives, adopts its maxims, and treads its beaten paths. To rouse him from his lethargy, and to give a new current to his thoughts, heroes appear from time to time on the verge of his horizon, and hero-worship, Pagan or Christian, withdraws him for a while from still baser idolatry. To contemplate the motives and the career of such men, may teach much which well deserves the knowing; but nothing more clearly than this—that no one can have shrines erected to his memory in the hearts of men of distant generations, unless his own heart was an altar on which daily sacrifices of fervent devotion, and magnanimous self-denial, were offered to the only true object of human worship.

MARTIN LUTHER.*

ENGLISH literature is singularly defective in whatever relates to the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland, and to the lives of the great men by whom it was accomplished. A native of this island who would know anything to the purpose, of Reuchlin or Hutten, of Luther or Melancthon, of Zuingle, Bucer, or Ecolampadius, of Calvin or Farel, must betake himself to other languages than his own. To fill this void in our libraries, is an enterprise which might stimulate the zeal, and establish the reputation, of the ripest student of Ecclesiastical History amongst us. In no other field could he discover more ample resources for narratives of dramatic interest ; for the delineation of characters contrasted in everything except their common design ; for exploring the influence of philosophy, arts, and manners, on the fortunes of mankind ; and for reverently tracing the footsteps of Divine Providence, moving among the ways and works of men, imparting dignity to events otherwise unimportant, and a deep significance to occurrences in any other view as trivial as a border raid, or as the palaver of an African village.

Take, for example, the life of Ulric de Hutten, a noble, a warrior, and a rake ; a theologian withal, and a Reformer ; and at the same time the author, or one of the authors, of a satire to be classed amongst the most effective which the world has ever seen. Had the recreative powers of Walter Scott been exercised on Hutten's story, how familiar would all Christendom have been with the stern

* Any interest which may have attached to this essay, on its first appearance, has been so effectually superseded by Mr Hazlitt's more recent work on Luther, that the republication of it now could hardly be justified, were it not that it forms an essential part of the series to which it belongs, by exhibiting the singular contrast between the characters of the great German Reformer and of the Founders of Jesuitism. Every one, however, who wishes to understand the personal character of Martin Luther, will of course study it in Mr Hazlitt's book, and in the authorities to which he refers.

Baron of Franconia, and Ulric, his petulant boy; with the fat Abbot of Fulda driving the fiery youth by penances and homilies to range a literary vagabond on the face of the earth; and with the burgomaster of Frankfort, avenging by a still more formidable punishment the pasquinade which had insulted his civic dignity. How vivid would be the image of Hutten at the siege of Pavia, soothing despair itself by writing his own epitaph; giving combat to five Frenchmen for the glory of Maximilian; and receiving from the delighted Emperor the frugal reward of a poetic crown. Then would have succeeded the court and princely patronage of "the Pope of Mentz," and the camp and castle of the Lord of Sickengen, until the chequered scene closed with Ulric's death-bed employment of producing a satire on his stupid physician.

All things were welcome to Hutten; arms and love, theology and debauchery, a disputation with the Thomists, a controversy with Erasmus, or a war to the knife with the dunces of his age. His claim to have written the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, has, indeed, been disputed, though with little apparent reason. It is at least clear that he asserted his own title, and that no other candidate for that equivocal honour united in himself the wit and learning, the audacity and licentiousness, which successively adorn and disfigure that extraordinary work. Neither is it quite just to exclude the satirist from the list of those who lent a material aid to the Reformation. It is not, certainly, by the heartiest or the most contemptuous laugh that dynasties, whether civil or religious, are subverted; but it would be unfair to deny altogether to Hutten the praise of having contributed by his merciless banter to the successes of wiser and better men than himself. To set on edge the teeth of the Ciceronians by the Latinity of the correspondents of the profound Ortuinus, was but a pleasant jest; but it was something more to confer an immortality of ridicule on the erudite doctors who seriously apprehended, from the study of Greek and Hebrew, the revival at once of the worship of Minerva, and of the rite of circumcision. It was in strict satirical justice, that places were assigned to these sages in a farce as broad as was ever drawn by Aristophanes or Molière; a farce which was destitute neither of the riotous mirth, nor even of some of that deep wisdom which it was the pleasure of those great dramatists to exhibit beneath that grotesque mask.

Much as Luther himself *incolumi gravitate jocum tentavit*, he received with little relish these sallies of his facetious ally; whom he not only censured for employing the language of reproach and insult, but, harder still, described as a buffoon. It is, perhaps, well for the dignity of the stern Reformer that the taunt was unknown

to the object of it ; for, great as he was, Hutten would not have spared him ; and as the quiver of few satirists had been stored with keener or more envenomed shafts, so, few illustrious men have exposed to such an assailant a greater number of vulnerable points. But of these, or of the other private habits of Luther, little is generally recorded. History having claimed him for her own, Biography has yielded to the pretensions of her more stately sister ; and the domestic and interior life of the antagonist of Leo and of Charles yet remains to be written.

The materials are abundant, and of the highest interest ;—a collection of letters scarcely less voluminous than those of Voltaire ; the *Colloquia Mensalia*, in some parts of more doubtful authenticity, yet, on the whole, a genuine record of his conversation ; his theological writings, a mine of egotisms of the richest ore ; and the works of Melancthon, Seckendorf, Cochleus, Erasmus, and many others, who flourished in an age when, amongst learned men, to write and to live were almost convertible terms. M. Merle D'Aubigné's "History of the Great Reformation of the Sixteenth Century in Germany, Switzerland, &c.," is, in fact, an unfinished Life of Luther, closing with his appeal from the Pope to a General Council. It is the most elaborate of a long series of works on the Reformation, recently published on the Continent, by the present inheritors of the principles and passions which first agitated Europe in the beginning of the sixteenth century. By far the most amusing of the series is the collection of *Lutheriana* by M. Michelet, which we are bound to notice with especial gratitude, as affording a greater number of valuable references than all other books of the same kind put together. It was drawn up as a relaxation from those severer studies on which M. Michelet's historical fame depends. But the pastime of some men is worth far more than the labours of the rest ; and this compilation has every merit but that of an appropriate title ; for an autobiography it assuredly is not, in any of the senses, accurate or popular, of that much abused word.

Insulated in our habits and pursuits, not less than in our geographical position, it is but tardily that within the intrenchment of our four seas, we sympathise with the intellectual movements of the nations which dwell beyond them. Many, however, are the motives, of at least equal force in these islands as in the old and new continents of the Christian world, for diverting the eye from the present to the past, from those who would now reform, to those who first reformed, the churches of Europe. Or, if graver reasons could not be found, it is beyond all dispute that the professors of Wittemberg, three hundred years ago, formed a group as much more

entertaining than those of Oxford at present, as the contest with Dr Eck exceeded in interest the squabble with Dr Hampden.

The old Adam in Martin Luther (a favourite subject of his discourse) was a very formidable personage ; lodged in a bodily frame of surpassing vigour, solicited by vehement appetites, and alive to all the passions by which man is armed for offensive or defensive warfare with his fellows. In accordance with a general law, that temperament was sustained by nerves which shrunk neither from the endurance nor the infliction of necessary pain ; and by a courage which rose at the approach of difficulty, and exulted in the presence of danger. A rarer prodigality of nature combined with these endowments an inflexible reliance on the conclusions of his own understanding, and on the energy of his own will. He came forth on the theatre of life another Samson Agonistes, "with plain heroic magnitude of mind, and celestial vigour armed ;" ready to wage an unequal combat with the haughtiest of the giants of Gath ; or to shake down, though it were on his own head, the columns of the proudest of her temples.

Viewed in his belligerent aspect, he might have seemed a being cut off from the common brotherhood of mankind, and bearing from on high a commission to bring to pass the remote ends of the Divine benevolence, by means appalling to human guilt and to human weakness. But he was reclaimed into the bosom of the great family of man, by bonds strong and numerous in proportion to the vigour of the propensities they were intended to control. There brooded over him a constitutional melancholy, sometimes engendering sadness, but more often giving birth to dreams so wild, that, if vivified by the imagination of Dante, they might have passed into visions as awful and majestic as those of the *Inferno*. As these mists rolled away bright gleams of sunshine took their place ; and that robust mind yielded itself to social enjoyments, with the hearty relish, the broad humour, and the glorious profusion of sense and nonsense, which betoken the relaxations of those who abdicate an habitual sovereignty over other men to become, for a passing hour, their companions. Luther had other and yet more potent spells with which to cast out the demons who haunted him. He had ascertained and taught that the spirit of darkness abhors sweet sounds not less than light itself ; for music (he says), while it chases away the evil suggestions, effectually baffles the wiles of the tempter. His lute, and hand, and voice, accompanying his own solemn melodies, were therefore raised to repel the more vehement aggressions of the enemy of mankind ; whose feeble assaults he encountered by studying the politics of a rookery, by assigning to each beautiful creation of his

flower-beds an appropriate sylph or genius, by the company of his Catherine de Bora, and the sports of their saucy John and playful Magdalene.

The name of Catherine has long enjoyed a wide but doubtful celebrity. She was a lady of noble birth, and was still young when she renounced the ancient faith, her convent, and her vows, to become the wife of Martin Luther. From this portentous union of a monk and nun, the "obscure men" confidently predicted the birth of Antichrist; while the wits and scholars greeted their nuptials with a thick hail-storm of epigrams, hymns, and dithyrambs, the learned Eccius himself chiming into the loud chorus with an elaborate epithalamium. The bridegroom met the tempest with the spirit of another Benedict, by a counter-blast of invective and sarcasms, which, afterwards collected under the title of "the Lion and the Ass," perpetuated the memory of this redoubtable controversy. "My enemies," he exclaimed, "triumphed. They shouted, *Io, Io!* I was resolved to show that, old and feeble as I am, I am not going to sound a retreat. I trust I shall do still more to spoil their merriment."

This indiscreet, if not criminal marriage, scarcely admitted a more serious defence. Yet Luther was not a man to do anything which he was not prepared to justify. "He had inculcated on others the advantages of the conjugal state, and was bound to enforce his precepts by his example. The war of the peasants had brought reproach on the principles of the Reformation; and it was incumbent on him to sustain the minds of his followers, and to bear his testimony to evangelical truth by deeds as well as words. Therefore, it was fit that he should marry a nun." Such is the logic of inclination, and such the presumption of uninterrupted success. "Dr Ortuinus" himself never lent his venerable sanction to a stranger sophistry, than that which could thus discover in one great scandal an apology for another far more justly offensive.

Catherine was a very pretty woman, if Holbein's portrait may be believed; although even her personal charms have been rudely impugned by her husband's enemies, in grave disquisitions devoted to that momentous question. Better still, she was a faithful and affectionate wife. But there is a no less famous Catherine to whom she bore a strong family resemblance. She brought from her nunnery an anxious mind, a shrewish temper, and great volubility of speech. Luther's arts were not those of Petruchio. With him reverence for woman was at once a natural instinct and a point of doctrine. He observed, that when the first woman was brought to the first man to receive her name, he called her not wife, but

mother — “Eve, the mother of all living” — a word, he says, “more eloquent than ever fell from the lips of Demosthenes.” So, like a wise and kind-hearted man, when his Catherine prattled he smiled, when she frowned he playfully stole away her anger, and chided her anxieties with the gentlest soothing. A happier or a more peaceful home was not to be found in that land of domestic tenderness. Yet the confession must be made, that, from first to last, this love tale is nothing less than a case of *læsa majestas* against the sovereignty of romance. Luther and his bride did not meet on either side with the raptures of a first affection. He had long before sighed for the fair Ave Schonfelden, and she had not concealed her attachment for a certain Jerome Baungartner. Ave had bestowed herself in marriage on a physician of Prussia; and before Luther’s irrevocable vows were pledged, Jerome received from his great rival an intimation that he still possessed the heart, and, with common activity, might even yet secure the hand, of Catherine. But honest Jerome was not a man to be hurried. He silently resigned his pretensions to his illustrious competitor, who, even in the moment of success, had the discernment to perceive, and the frankness to avow, that his love was not of a flaming or ungovernable nature.

“Nothing on this earth,” said the good Dame Ursula Schweickard, with whom Luther boarded when at school at Eisenach, “is of such inestimable value as a woman’s love.” This maxim, recommended more, perhaps, by truth than originality, dwelt long on the mind and on the tongue of the Reformer. To have dismissed this or any other text without a commentary would have been abhorrent from his habits of mind; and in one of his letters to Catherine he thus insists on a kindred doctrine, the converse of the first. “The greatest favour of God is to have a good and pious husband, to whom you can entrust your all, your person, and even your life; whose children and yours are the same. Catherine, you have a pious husband who loves you. You are an empress; thank God for it.” His conjugal meditations were often in a gayer mood; as for example, — “If I were going to make love again I would carve an obedient woman out of marble, in despair of finding one in any other way.” — “During the first year of our marriage she would sit by my side while I was at my books, and, not having anything else to say, would ask me whether, in Prussia, the Margrave and the house steward were not always brothers.” — “Did you say your Pater, Catherine, before you began the sermon? If you had, I think you would have been forbidden to preach.” He addresses her sometimes as my Lord Catherine, or Catherine the Queen, the

Empress, the Doctress; or as Catherine the rich and noble Lady of Zeilsdorf, where they had a cottage and a few roods of ground. But as age advanced, these playful sallies were abandoned for the following graver and more affectionate style. "To the gracious Lady Catherine Luther, my dear wife, who vexes herself overmuch, grace and peace in the Lord! Dear Catherine, you should read St John, and what is said in the Catechism of the confidence to be reposed in God. Indeed you torment yourself as though he were not Almighty, and could not produce new Doctors Martin by the score, if the old doctor should drown himself in the Saal. — There is one who watches over me more effectually than thou canst, or than all the angels. He sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty. Therefore be calm."

There were six children of this marriage; and it is at once touching and amusing to see with what adroitness Luther contrived to gratify at once his tenderness as a father and his taste as a theologian. When the brightening eye of one of the urchins round his table confessed the allurements of a downy peach, it was "the image of a soul rejoicing in hope." Over an infant pressed to his mother's bosom thus moralised the severe but affectionate Reformer: "That babe and everything else which belongs to us is hated by the Pope, by Duke George, by their adherents, and by all the devils. Yet, dear little fellow, he troubles himself not a whit for all these powerful enemies; he gaily sucks the breast, looks round him with a loud laugh, and lets them storm as they like." There were darker seasons, when even theology and polemics give way to the more powerful voice of nature; nor, indeed, has the deepest wisdom anything to add to his lamentation over the bier of his daughter Magdalene. "Such is the power of natural affection, that I cannot endure this without tears and groans, or rather an utter deadness of heart. At the bottom of my soul are engraven her looks, her words, her gestures, as I gazed at her in her lifetime and on her deathbed. My dutiful, my gentle daughter! even the death of Christ (and what are all deaths compared to his?) cannot tear me from this thought as it should. She was playful, lovely, and full of love!"

Whatever others may think of these nursery tales, we have certain reasons of our own for suspecting that there is not, on either side of the Tweed, a *Papa* who will not read the following letter, sent by Luther to his eldest boy during the Diet of Augsburg, with more interest than any or all of the five "Confessions" presented to the Emperor on that memorable occasion.

"Grace and peace be with thee, my dear little boy! I rejoice to find that you are attentive to your lessons and your prayers. Per-

severe, my child, and when I come home I will bring you some pretty fairing. I know of a beautiful garden, full of children in golden dresses, who run about under the trees, eating apples, pears, cherries, nuts, and plums. They jump and sing and are full of glee, and they have pretty little horses with golden bridles and silver saddles. As I went by this garden I asked the owner of it who those children were, and he told me that they were the good children, who loved to say their prayers, and to learn their lessons, and who fear God. Then I said to him, Dear sir, I have a boy, little John Luther; may not he too come to this garden, to eat these beautiful apples and pears, to ride these pretty little horses, and to play with the other children? And the man said, If he is very good, if he says his prayers, and learns his lessons cheerfully, he may come, and he may bring with him little Philip and little James. Here they will find fifes and drums and other nice instruments to play upon, and they shall dance and shoot with little crossbows. Then the man showed me in the midst of the garden a beautiful meadow to dance in. But all this happened in the morning before the children had dined; so I could not stay till the beginning of the dance, but I said to the man, I will go and write to my dear little John, and teach him to be good, to say his prayers, and learn his lessons, that he may come to this garden. But he has an Aunt Magdalene, whom he loves very much—may he bring her with him? The man said, Yes, tell him that they may come together. Be good therefore, dear child, and tell Philip and James the same, that you may all come and play in this beautiful garden. I commit you to the care of God. Give my love to your Aunt Magdalene, and kiss her for me. From your Papa who loves you,—Martin Luther.”

If it be not a sufficient apology for the quotation of this fatherly epistle to say, that it is the talk of Martin Luther, a weightier defence may be drawn from the remark that it illustrates one of his most serious opinions. The views commonly received amongst Christians, of the nature of the happiness reserved in another state of being, for the obedient and faithful in this life, he regarded, if not as erroneous, yet as resting on no sufficient foundation, and as ill adapted to “allure to brighter worlds.” He thought that the enjoyments of Heaven had been refined away to such a point of evanescent spirituality as to deprive them of their necessary attraction; and the allegory invented for the delight of little John, was but the adaptation to the thoughts of a child of a doctrine which he was accustomed to inculcate on others, under imagery more elevated than that of drums, crossbows, and golden bridles.

There is but one step from the nursery to the servants' hall ; and they who have borne with the parental counsels to little John, may endure the following letter respecting an aged namesake of his who was about to quit Luther's family :—

“We must dismiss old John with honour. We know that he has always served us faithfully and zealously, and as became a Christian servant. What have we not given to vagabonds and thankless students who have made a bad use of our money? So we will not be niggardly to so worthy a servant, on whom our money will be bestowed in a manner pleasing to God. You need not remind me that we are not rich. I would gladly give him ten florins if I had them, but do not let it be less than five. He is not able to do much for himself. Pray help him in any other way you can. Think how this money can be raised. There is a silver cup which might be pawned. Sure I am that God will not desert us. Adieu.”

Luther's pleasures were as simple as his domestic affections were pure. He wrote metrical versions of the Psalms, so well described by Mr Hallam, as holding a middle place between the doggerel of Sternhold and Hopkins, and the meretricious ornaments of the later versifiers of the Songs of David. He wedded to them music of his own, to which the most obtuse ear cannot listen without emotion. The greatest of the sons of Germany was, in this respect, a true child of that vocal land ; for such was his enthusiasm for the art, that he assigned to it a place second only to that of theology itself. He was also an ardent lover of painting, and yielded to Albert Durer the homage which he denied to Cajetan and Erasmus. His are among the earliest works embellished by the aid of the engraver. With the birds of his native country he had established a strict intimacy, watching, smiling, and moralising over their habits. “That little fellow,” he said of a bird going to roost, “has chosen his shelter, and is quietly rocking himself to sleep without a care for to-morrow's lodging, calmly holding by his little twig, and leaving God to think for him.” The following parable, in a letter to Spalatin, is in a more ambitious strain :—

“You are going to Augsburg without having taken the auspices, and ignorant when you will be allowed to begin. I, on the other hand, am in the midst of the Comitia, in the presence of illustrious sovereigns, kings, dukes, grandees, and nobles, who are solemnly debating affairs of state, and making the air ring with their deliberations and decrees. Instead of imprisoning themselves in those royal caverns which you call palaces, they hold their assemblies in the sunshine, with the arch of Heaven for their tent, substituting

for costly tapestries the foliage of trees, where they enjoy their liberty. Instead of confining themselves in parks and pleasure-grounds, they range over the earth to its utmost limits. They detest the stupid luxuries of silk and embroidery, but all dress in the same colour, and put on very much the same looks. To say the truth, they all wear black, and all sing one tune. It is a song formed of a single note, with no variation but what is produced by the pleasing contrast of young and old voices. I have seen and heard nothing of their emperor. They have a supreme contempt for the quadruped employed by our gentry, having a much better method for setting the heaviest artillery at defiance. As far as I have been able to understand their resolutions by the aid of an interpreter, they have unanimously determined to wage war through the whole year against the wheat, oats, and barley, and the best corn and fruits of every kind. There is reason to fear that victory will attend them everywhere; for they are a skilful and crafty race of warriors, equally expert in collecting booty by violence and by surprise. It has afforded me great pleasure to attend their assemblies as an idle looker-on. The hope I cherish of the triumphs of their valour over the wheat and barley, and every other enemy, renders me the sincere and faithful friend of these *patres patriæ* these saviours of the commonwealth. If I could serve them by a wish, I would implore their deliverance from their present ugly name of Crows. This is nonsense, but there is some seriousness in it. It is a jest which helps me to drive away painful thoughts."

The love of fables, which Luther thus indulged at one of the most eventful eras of his life, was amongst his favourite amusements. Æsop lay on the same table with the book of Psalms, and the two translations proceeded alternately. Except the Bible, he declared that he knew no better book; and pronounced it not to be the work of any single author, but the fruit of the labours of the greatest minds in all ages. It supplied him with endless jests and allusions; as, for example,—“The dog in charge of the butcher’s tray, unable to defend it from the avidity of other curs, said,—‘Well, then, I may as well have my share of the meat,’ and fell to accordingly; which is precisely what the Emperor is doing with the property of the Church.”

Few really great men, indeed, have hazarded a larger number of jokes in the midst of a circle of note-taking associates. They have left on record the following amidst many other *memorabilia*:—“God made the Priest. The Devil set about an imitation, but he made the tonsure too large, and produced a Monk.” A cup composed of five hoops or rings of glass of different colours circulated

at his table. Eisleben, an Antinomian, was of the party. Luther pledged him in the following words:—"Within the second of these rings lie the Ten Commandments; within the next ring the Creed; then comes the Paternoster; the Catechism lies at the bottom." So saying, he drank it off. When Eisleben's turn came, he emptied the cup only down to the beginning of the second ring. "Ah," said Luther, "I knew that he would stick at the Commandments, and therefore would not reach the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, or the Catechism."

It must be confessed, however, that Luther's pleasantries are less remarkable for wit or delicacy than for the union of strong sense and honest merriment. They were the careless, though not inconsiderate sport of a free-spoken man, in a circle where religion and modesty, protected by an inbred reverence, did not seek the doubtful defence of conventional outworks. But pensive thoughts were the more habitual food of his overburdened mind. Neither social enjoyments, nor the tenderness of domestic life, could ever long repel the melancholy which brooded over him. It breaks out in every part of his correspondence, and tinges all his recorded conversation. "Because," he says, "my manner is sometimes gay and joyous, many think that I am always treading on roses. God knows what is in my heart." "There is nothing in this life which gives me pleasure; I am tired of it. May the Lord come quickly and take me hence. Let him come to his final judgment—I await the blow. Let him hurl his thunders that I may be at rest." "Forty years more life! I would not purchase Paradise at such a price." Yet with this lassitude of the world, his contemplations of death were solemn even to sadness. "How gloriously," said his friend, Dr Jonas, "does St Paul speak of his own death. I cannot enter into this." "It appears to me," replied Luther, "that when meditating on that subject, even St Paul himself could not have felt all the energy which possessed him when he wrote. I preach, write, and talk about dying, with a greater firmness than I really possess, or than others ascribe to me." In common with all men of this temperament, he was profuse in extolling the opposite disposition. "The birds," he says, "must fly over our heads, but why allow them to roost in our hair?" "Gaiety and a light heart, in all virtue and decorum, are the best medicine for the young, or rather for all. I, who have passed my life in dejection and gloomy thoughts, now catch at enjoyment, come from what quarter it may, and even seek for it. Criminal pleasure, indeed, comes from Satan, but that which we find in the society of good and pious men is approved by God. Ride, hunt with your friends, amuse yourself in

their company. Solitude and melancholy are poison. They are deadly to all, but, above all, to the young."

The sombre character of Luther's mind cannot be correctly understood by those who are wholly ignorant of the legendary traditions of his native land. This remark is made and illustrated by M. Henry Heine, with that curious knowledge of such lore as none but a denizen of Germany could acquire. In the mines of Mansfeld, at Eisenach, and at Erfurth, the visible and the invisible worlds were almost equally populous; and the training of youth was not merely a discipline for the future offices of life, but an initiation into mysteries as impressive, though not quite so sublime, as those of Eleusis. The unearthly inhabitants of every land are near of kin to the human cultivators of the soil. The Killkropff of Saxony differed from a fairy or a hamadryad as a Saxon differs from a Frenchman or a Greek; the thin essences by which these spiritual bodies are sustained being distilled according to their various national tastes, from the dews of Hymettus, the light wines of Provence, and the strong beer of Germany. At the fireside around which Luther's family drew, in his childhood, there gathered a race of imps who may be considered as the presiding genii of the turnspit and the stable;—witches expert in the right use of the broomstick, but incapable of perverting it into a locomotive engine; homely in gait, coarse in feature, sordid in their habits, with canine appetites and superhuman powers, and, for the most part, eaten up with misanthropy. When, in his twentieth year, Luther for the first time opened the Bible, and read there of spiritual agents, the inveterate enemies of our race, these *spectra* were projected on a mind over which such legends had already exercised an indestructible influence. Satan and his angels crowded upon his imagination, neither as shapeless presences casting their gloomy shadows on the soul, nor as mysterious impersonations of her foul and cruel desires, nor as warriors engaged with the powers of light, and love, and holiness, in the silent motionless war of antagonistic energies. Luther's devils were a set of athletic, cross-grained, ill-conditioned wretches, with vile shapes and fiendish faces; who, like the monsters of Dame Ursula's kitchen, gave buffet for buffet, hate for hate, and joke for joke. His Satan was not only something less than archangel ruined, but was quite below the society of that Prince of Darkness, whom Mad Tom in *Lear* declares to have been a gentleman. Possessing a sensitive rather than a creative imagination, Luther transferred the visionary lore, drawn from these humble sources, to the machinery of the great epic of revelation, with but little change or

embellishment ; and thus contrived to reduce to the level of very vulgar prose some of the noblest conceptions of inspired poetry.

At the Castle of Wartburg—his Patmos,—where he dwelt the willing prisoner of his friendly sovereign, the Reformer chanced to have a plate of nuts at his supper table. How many of them he swallowed, there is, unfortunately, no Boswell to tell ; yet, perhaps, not a few—for, as he slept, the nuts, animated as it would seem by the demon of the pantry, executed a sort of waltz, knocking against each other, and against the slumberer's bedstead ; when, lo ! the staircase became possessed by a hundred barrels rolling up and down, under the guidance, probably, of the imp of the spigot. Yet all approach to Luther's room was barred by chains and by an iron door—vain entrenchments against Satan ! He arose, solemnly defied the fiend, repeated the eighth Psalm, and resigned himself to sleep. Another visit from the same fearful adversary at Nuremburg led to the opposite result. The Reformer flew from his bed to seek refuge in society.

Once upon a time, Carlostadt, the Sacramentarian, being in the pulpit, saw a tall man enter the church, and take his seat by one of the burgesses of the town. The intruder then retired, betook himself to the preacher's house, and exhibited frightful symptoms of a disposition to break all the bones of his child. Thinking better of it, however, he left with the boy a message for Carlostadt, that he might be looked for again in three days. It is needless to add that, on the third day, there was an end of the poor preacher, and of his attacks on Luther and Consubstantiation.

In the cloisters of Wittemberg, Luther himself heard that peculiar noise which attests the devil's presence. It came from behind a stove, resembling, for all the world, the sound of throwing a faggot on the fire. This sound, however, is not invariable. An old priest, in the attitude of prayer, heard Satan behind him, grunting like a whole herd of swine. "Ah ! ah ! master devil," said the priest, "you have your deserts. There was a time when you were a beautiful angel, and there you are turned into a rascally hog !" The priests' devotions proceeded without further disturbance ; "for," observed Luther, "there is nothing the devil can bear so little as contempt." He once saw and even touched a Killkropff or supposititious child. This was at Dessau. The deviling—for it had no other parent than Satan himself—was about twelve years old, and looked exactly like any other boy. But the unlucky brat could do nothing but eat. He consumed as much food as four ploughmen. When things went ill in the house, his laugh was to be heard all

over it. If matters went smoothly, there was no peace for his screaming. Luther declares (of course sportively) that he recommended the Elector to have this scapegrace thrown into the Moldau, as it was a mere lump of flesh without a soul.

His visions sometimes assumed a deeper significance, if not a loftier aspect. In the year 1496, a frightful monster was discovered in the Tiber. It had the head of an ass, an emblem of the Pope; for the Church being a spiritual body incapable of a head, the Pope, who had audaciously assumed that character, was fitly represented under this asinine figure. The right hand resembled an elephant's foot, typifying the Papal tyranny over the weak and timid. The right foot was like an ox's hoof, shadowing forth the spiritual oppression exercised by doctors, confessors, nuns, monks, and scholastic theologians; while the left foot, armed with griffin's claws, could mean nothing else than the various ministers of the Pope's civil authority. How far Luther believed in the existence of the monster whose mysterious signification he thus interprets, it would not be easy to decide. Yet it is difficult to read his exposition, and to suppose it a mere pleasantry.

So constantly was he haunted with this midnight crew of devils, as to have raised a serious doubt of his sanity, which even Mr Hallam does not entirely discountenance. Yet the hypothesis is surely gratuitous. Intense study deranging the digestive organs of a man, whose bodily constitution required vigorous exercise, and whose mind had been early stored with such dreams as we have mentioned, sufficiently explains the restless importunity of the goblins amongst whom he lived. It is easier for a man to be in advance of his age on any subject than on this. It may be doubted whether the nerves of Seneca or Pliny would have been equal to a solitary evening walk by the lake Avernus. What wonder, then, if Martin Luther was convinced that suicides fall not by their own hand, but by those of diabolical emissaries, who really adjust the cord or point the knife—that particular spots, as, for example, the pool near the summit of the Mons Pilatus, were desecrated to Satan—that the wailings of his victims are to be heard in the howlings of the night wind—or that the throwing a stone into a pond in his own neighbourhood, immediately provoked such struggles of the evil spirit imprisoned below the water, as shook the neighbouring country like an earthquake?

The mental *phantasmagoria* of so illustrious a man are an exhibition to which no one who reveres his name would needlessly direct an unfriendly or an idle gaze. But the infirmities of our nature often afford the best measure of its strength. To estimate

the power by which temptation is overcome, you must ascertain the force of the propensities to which it is addressed. Amongst the elements of Luther's character was an awe, verging towards idolatry, for all things, whether in the works of God or in the institutions of man, which can be regarded as depositories of the Divine power, or as delegates of the Divine authority. From pantheism, the disease of imaginations at once devout and unhallowed, he was preserved in youth by his respect for the doctrines of the Church; and, in later life, by his absolute surrender of his own judgment to the text of the sacred canon. But as far as a pantheistic habit of thought and feeling can consist with the most unqualified belief in the incommunicable Unity of the Divine nature, such thoughts and feelings were habitual to him.

The same spirit which solemnly acknowledged the existence, whilst it abhorred the use, of the high faculties which, according to the popular faith, the foul fiends of earth, and air, and water, at once enjoy and pervert, contemplated with almost prostrate reverence the majesty and the hereditary glories of Rome; and the apostolical succession of her pontiff, with kings and emperors for his tributaries, the Catholic hierarchy as his vicegerents, and the human mind his universal empire. To brave the vengeance of such a dynasty, wielding the mysterious keys which close the gates of hell and open the portals of heaven, long appeared to Luther an impious audacity, of which nothing less than woe, eternal and unutterable, would be the sure and appropriate penalty. For a man of his temperament to hush these superstitious terrors, and abjure the golden idol to which the adoring eyes of all nations, kindred, and languages were directed, was a self-conquest, such as none but the most heroic minds can achieve; and to which even they are unequal, unless sustained by an invisible but omnipotent arm. For no error can be more extravagant than that which would reduce Martin Luther to the rank of a coarse spiritual demagogue. The deep self-distrust which, for ten successive years, postponed his irreconcilable war with Rome, clung to him to the last; nor was he ever unconscious of the dazzling splendour of the pageantry which his own hand had contributed so largely to overthrow. There is no alloy of affectation in the following avowal, taken from one of his letters to Erasmus:

“You must, indeed, feel yourself in some measure awed in the presence of a succession of learned men, and by the consent of so many ages, during which flourished scholars so conversant in sacred literature, and martyrs illustrious by so many miracles. To all this must be added the more modern theologians, universities, bishops,

and popes. On their side are arrayed learning, genius, numbers, dignity, station, power, sanctity, miracles, and what not. On mine Wycliff and Laurentius Valla, and, though you forget to mention him, Augustine also. Then comes Luther, a mean man, born but yesterday, supported only by a few friends, who have neither learning, nor genius, nor greatness, nor sanctity, nor miracles. Put them all together, and they have not wit enough to cure a spavined horse. What are they? What the wolf said of the nightingale—a voice, and nothing else. I confess it is with reason you pause in such a presence as this. For ten years together I hesitated myself. Could I believe that this Troy, which had triumphed over so many assaults, would fall at last? I call God to witness that I should have persisted in my fears, and should have hesitated until now, if truth had not compelled me to speak. You may well believe that my heart is not rock; and if it were, yet so many are the waves and storms which have beaten upon it, that it must have yielded when the whole weight of this authority came thundering on my head, like a deluge ready to overwhelm me.”

The same feelings were expressed at a later time in the following words:—

“I daily perceive how difficult it is to overcome long-cherished scruples. Oh, what pain has it cost me, though the Scripture is on my side, to defend myself to my own heart for having dared singly to resist the Pope, and to denounce him as Antichrist! What have been the afflictions of my bosom! How often, in the bitterness of my soul, have I pressed myself with the Papist’s argument,—Art thou alone wise? are all others in error? have they been mistaken for so long a time? What if you are yourself mistaken, and are dragging with you so many souls into eternal condemnation? Thus did I reason with myself, till Jesus Christ, by his own infallible word, tranquillised my heart, and sustained it against this argument, as a reef of rocks thrown up against the waves laughs at all their fury.”

He who thus acknowledged the influence, while he defied the despotism, of human authority, was self-annihilated in the presence of his Maker. “I have learned,” he says, “from the Holy Scriptures, that it is a perilous and a fearful thing to speak in the House of God; to address those who will appear in judgment against us, when at the last day we shall be found in His presence; when the gaze of the angels shall be directed to us, when every creature shall behold the Divine Word, and shall listen till He speaks. Truly, when I think of this, I have no wish but to be silent, and to cancel

all that I have written. It is a fearful thing to be called to render to God an account of every idle word."

Philip Melancthon occasionally endeavoured, by affectionate applause, to sustain and encourage the mind which was thus bowed down under the sense of unworthiness. But the praise, even of the chosen friend of his bosom, found no echo there. He rejected it, kindly indeed, but with a rebuke so earnest and passionate, as to show that the commendations of him whom he loved and valued most were unwelcome. They served but to deepen the depressing consciousness of ill desert, inseparable from his lofty conceptions of the duties which had been assigned to him.

In Luther, as in other men, the stern and heroic virtues demanded for their support that profound lowliness which might at first appear the most opposed to their development. The eye which often turns inward with self-complacency, or habitually looks round for admiration, is never long or steadfastly fixed on any more elevated object. It is permitted to no man at once to court the applauses of the world, and to challenge a place amongst the generous and devoted benefactors of his species. The enervating spell of vanity, so fatal to many a noble intellect, exercised no perceptible control over Martin Luther. Though conscious of the rare endowments he had received from Providence (of which that very consciousness was not the least important), the secret of his strength lay in the heartfelt persuasion, that his superiority to other men gave him no title to their commendations, and in his abiding sense of the little value of such praises. The growth of his social affections was unimpeded by self-regarding thoughts; and he could endure the frowns and even the coldness of those whose approving smiles he judged himself unworthy to receive, and did not much care to win.

His was not that feeble benevolence which leans for support, or depends for existence, on the sympathy of those for whom it labours. Reproofs, sharp, unsparing, and pitiless, were familiar to his tongue and to his pen. Such a censure he had directed to the Archbishop of Mentz, which Spalatin, in the name of their common friend and sovereign, the Elector Frederic, implored him to suppress. "No," replied Luther, "in defence of the fold of Christ, I will oppose to the utmost of my power this ravening wolf, as I have resisted others. I send you my book, which was ready before your letter reached me. It has not induced me to alter a word. The question is decided, I cannot heed your objections." They were such, however, as most men would have thought reasonable enough. Here are some of the words of which neither friend nor sovereign could dissuade the pub-

lication. "Did you imagine that Luther was dead? Believe it not. He lives under the protection of that God who has already humbled the Pope, and is ready to begin with the Archbishop of Mentz a game for which few are prepared."

To the severe admonition which followed, the princely prelate answered in his own person, in terms of the most humble deference, leaving to Capito, his minister, the ticklish office of remonstrating against the rigour with which the lash had been applied. But neither soothing nor menaces could abate Luther's confidence in his cause and in himself. "Christianity," he replies, "is open and honest. It sees things as they are, and proclaims them as they are. I am for tearing off every mask, for managing nothing, for extenuating nothing, for shutting the eyes to nothing, that truth may be transparent and unadulterated, and may have a free course. Think you that Luther is a man who is content to shut his eyes if you can but lull him by a few cajoleries?" "Expect everything from my affection; but reverence, nay, tremble for the faith."

George, Duke of Saxony, the near kinsman of Frederic, and one of the most determined enemies of the Reformation, not seldom provoked and encountered the same resolute defiance. "Should God call me to Wittenberg, I would go there, though it should rain Duke Georges for nine days together, and each new Duke should be nine times more furious than this." "Though exposed daily to death in the midst of my enemies, and without any human resource, I never in my life despised anything so heartily as these stupid threats of Duke George, and his associates in folly. I write in the morning, fasting, with my heart filled with holy confidence. Christ lives and reigns, and I too shall live and reign."

Here is a more comprehensive denunciation of the futility of the attempts made to arrest his course.

"To the language of the Fathers, of men, of angels, and of devils, I oppose neither antiquity nor numbers, but the single word of the Eternal Majesty, even that gospel which they are themselves compelled to acknowledge. Here is my hold, my stand, my resting-place, my glory, and my triumph. Hence I assault Popes, Thomists, Henrycists, Sophists, and all the gates of hell. I little heed the words of men, whatever may have been their sanctity, nor am I anxious about tradition or doubtful customs. The Word of God is above all. If the Divine Majesty be on my side, what care I for the rest, though a thousand Augustines, and a thousand Cyprians, and a thousand such churches as those of Henry, should rise against me? God can neither err nor deceive. Augustine, Cyprian, and all the saints, can err, and have erred."

"At Leipsic, at Augsburg, and at Worms, my spirit was as free as a flower of the field." "He whom God moves to speak, expresses himself openly and freely, careless whether he is alone or has others on his side. So spake Jeremiah, and I may boast of having done the same. God has not for the last thousand years bestowed on any bishop such great gifts as on me, and it is right that I should extol his gifts. Truly, I am indignant with myself that I do not heartily rejoice and give thanks. Now and then I raise a faint hymn of thanksgiving, and feebly praise Him. Well! live or die, *Domini sumus*. You may take the word either in the genitive or the nominative case. Therefore, Sir Doctor, be firm."

This buoyant spirit sometimes expressed itself in more pithy phrase. When he first wrote against indulgences, Dr Jerome Schurf said to him, "What are you about?—they won't allow it." "What if they *must* allow it?" was the peremptory answer.

The preceding passages, while they illustrate his indestructible confidence in himself as the minister, and in his cause as the behest, of Heaven, are redolent of that unseemly violence and asperity which are attested at once by the regrets of his friends, the reproaches of his enemies, and his own acknowledgments. So fierce, indeed, and contumelious and withering is his invective, as to suggest the theory, that, in her successive transmigrations, the same fiery soul which in one age breathed "the Divine Philippics," and in another, the "Letters on a Regicide Peace," was lodged in the sixteenth century under the cowl of an Augustinian monk; retaining her indomitable energy of abuse, though condemned to a temporary divorce from her inspiring genius. Yet what she lost in eloquence in her transit from the Roman to the Irishman, this upbraiding spirit more than retrieved in generous and philanthropic ardour, while she dwelt in the bosom of the Saxon. Luther's rage, for it is nothing less—his scurrilities, for they are no better—are at least the genuine language of passion, excited by a deep abhorrence of imposture, tyranny, and wrong. Through the ebullitions of his wrath may be discovered his lofty self-esteem, but not a single movement of puerile self-applause; his cordial scorn for fools and their folly, but not one heartless sarcasm; his burning indignation against oppressors, whether spiritual or secular, unclouded by so much as a passing shade of malignity. The torrent of emotion is headlong, but never turbulent. When we are least able to sympathise with his irascible feelings, it is also least in our power to refuse our admiration to a mind which, when thus torn up to its lowest depths, discloses no trace of envy, selfishness, or revenge, or of any still baser inmate. His mission from on high may be disputed, but hardly his own belief in it. In

that persuasion, his thoughts often reverted to the Prophet of Israel mocking the idolatrous priests of Baal, and menacing their still more guilty King; and if the mantle of Elijah might have been borne with a more imposing majesty, it could not have fallen on one better prepared to pour contempt on the proudest enemies of truth, or to brave their utmost resentment.

Is it paradoxical to ascribe Luther's boisterous invective to his inherent reverence for all those persons and institutions, in favour of which wisdom, power, and rightful dominion are involuntarily presumed? He lived under the control of an imagination susceptible, though not creative—of that passive mental sense to which it belongs to embrace, rather than to originate—to fix and deepen our more serious impressions, rather than to minister to the understanding in the search or the embellishment of truth. This propensity, the basis of religion itself in some, of loyalty in others, and of superstition perhaps in all, prepares the feeble for a willing servitude; and furnishes despotism with zealous instruments in men of stronger nerves and stouter hearts. It steeled Dominic and Loyola for their relentless tasks, and might have raised St Martin of Wittemberg to the honours of canonisation; if, in designating him for his arduous office, Providence had not controlled the undue sensibility of Luther's mind, by imparting to him a brother's love for all the humbler members of the family of man, and a filial fear of God, stronger even than his reverence for the powers and principalities of this sublunary world. Between his religious affections and his homage for the idols of his imagination, he was agitated by a ceaseless conflict. The nice adjustment of such a balance ill suited his impatient and irritable temper; and he assaulted the objects of his early respect with an impetuosity which betrays his secret dread of those formidable antagonists (so he esteemed them) of God and of mankind. He could not trust himself to be moderate. The restraints of education, habit, and natural disposition, could be overborne only by the excitement which he courted and indulged. His long-cherished veneration for those who tread upon the high places of the earth, lent to his warfare with them all the energy of self-denial, quickened by the anxiety of self-distrust. He scourged his lordly adversaries in the spirit of a flagellant taming his own rebellious flesh. His youthful devotion for "the solemn plausibilities of life," like all other affections obstinately repelled and mortified, reversed its original tendency, and gave redoubled fervour to the zeal with which he denounced their vanity and resisted their usurpation.

If these indignant contumelies offended the gentle, the learned,

and the wise, they sustained the courage and won the confidence of the multitude. The voice which commands in a tempest must battle with the roar of the elements. In his own apprehension at least, Luther's soul was among lions—the Princes of Germany and their ministers; Henry the Eighth and Edward Lee, his chaplain; the Sacramentarians and Anabaptists; the Universities of Cologne and Louvain; Charles and Leo; Adrian and Clement; Papists, Jurists, and Aristotelians; and, above all, the devils whom his creeds assigned to each of these formidable opponents as so many inspiring or ministering spirits. However fierce and indefensible may be his occasional style, history presents no more sublime picture than that of the humble monk triumphing over such adversaries, in the invincible power of a faith before which the present and the visible disappeared, to make way for things unseen, eternal, and remote. One brave spirit encountered and subdued a hostile world. An intellect of no gigantic proportions, seconded by learning of no marvellous compass, and gifted with no rare or exquisite abilities, but invincible in decision and constancy of purpose, advanced to the accomplishment of one great design, with a continually increasing *momentum*, before which all feeble minds retired, and all opposition was dissipated. The majesty of the contest, and the splendour of the results, may, perhaps, even in our fastidious and delicate age, be received as an apology for such reproofs as the following to the Royal "Defender of the Faith."

"There is much royal ignorance in this volume, but there is also much virulence and falsehood, which belongs to Lee the editor. In the cause of Christ I have trampled under-foot the idol of the Roman abomination which had usurped the place of God and the dominion of sovereigns and of the world. Who, then, is this Henry, this new Thomist, this disciple of the monster, that I should dread his blasphemies and his fury? Truly he is the Defender of the Church! Yes, of that Church of his which he thus extols—of that prostitute who is clothed in purple, drunk with her debaucheries—of that mother of fornications. Christ is my leader. I will strike with the same blow that Church and the defender with whom she has formed this strict union. They have challenged me to war. Well, they shall have war. They have scorned the peace I offered them. Well, they shall have no more peace. It shall be seen which will first be weary—the Pope or Luther."—"The world is gone mad. There are the Hungarians, assuming the character of defenders of God himself. They pray in their litanies, *ut nos defensores tuos exaudire digneris*—why do not some of our princes take on them the protection of Jesus Christ, others that of the Holy

Spirit? Then, indeed, the Divine Trinity would be well guarded."

The Briefs of Pope Adrian are thus disposed of:—"It is mortifying to be obliged to give such good German in answer to this wretched kitchen Latin. But it is the pleasure of God to confound anti-Christ in everything—to leave him neither literature nor language. They say that he has gone mad, and fallen into dotage. It is a shame to address us Germans in such Latin as this, and to send to sensible people such a clumsy and absurd interpretation of Scripture."

The Bulls of Pope Clement fare no better. "The Pope tells us in his answer that he is willing to throw open the golden doors. It is long since we opened all our doors in Germany. But these Italian Scaramouches have never restored a farthing of the gain they have made by their indulgences, dispensations, and other diabolical inventions. Good Pope Clement, all your clemency and gentleness won't pass here. We'll buy no more indulgences. Golden doors and bulls, get ye home again. Look to the Italians for payment. They who know ye will buy you no more. Thanks be to God, we know that they who possess and believe the Gospel, enjoy an uninterrupted jubilee. Excellent Pope, what care we for your bulls? You may save your seals and your parchment. They are in bad odour now-a-days."—"Let them accuse me of too much violence. I care not. Hereafter be it my glory that men shall tell how I inveighed and raged against the Papists. For the last ten years have I been humbling myself, and addressing them in none but respectful language. What has been the consequence of all this submission? To make bad worse. These people are but the more furious. Well, since they are incorrigible, as it is vain to hope to shake their infernal purposes by kindness, I will break with them, I will pursue them," &c.—"Such is my contempt for these Satans, that were I not confined here, I would go straight to Rome in spite of the devil and all these furies. But," he continues, in a more playful mood, "I must have patience with the Pope, with my boarders, my servants, with Catherine de Bora, and with everybody else. In short, I live a life of patience."

At the risk of unduly multiplying these quotations, we must add another, which has been quoted triumphantly by his enemies. It is his answer to the charge of mistranslating the Bible. "The ears of the Papists are too long with their hi! ha!—they are unable to criticise a translation from Latin into German. Tell them that Dr Martin Luther chooses that it shall be so; and that a Papist and a jackass are the same."

We should reprint no small portion of Luther's works before we

exhausted the examples which might be drawn from them, of the uproar with which he assailed his antagonists. To the reproaches which this violence drew on him, he rarely condescended to reply. But to his best and most powerful friend, the Elector Frederic, he makes a defence, in which there is some truth and more eloquence. "They say that these books of mine are too keen and cutting. They are right; I never meant them to be soft and gentle. My only regret is, that they cut no deeper. Think of the violence of my enemies, and you must confess that I have been too forbearing."—"All the world exclaims against me, vociferating the most hateful calumnies; and if, in my return, I, poor man, raise my voice, then nobody has been vehement but Luther. In fine, whatever I do or say must be wrong, even should I raise the dead. Whatever they do must be right, even should they deluge Germany with tears and blood." In his more familiar discourse, he gave another, and perhaps a more accurate, account of the real motives of his impetuosity. He purposely fanned the flame of an indignation which he thought virtuous, because the origin of it was so. "I never," he said, "write or speak so well as when I am in a passion." He found anger an effectual, and at last a necessary stimulant, and indulged in a liberal or rather in an intemperate use of it.

The tempestuous phase of Luther's mind was not, however, permanent. The wane of it may be traced in his later writings; and the cause may be readily assigned. The liberator of the human mind was soon to discover that the powers he had set free were not subject to his control. The Iconoclasts, Anabaptists, and other innovators, however welcome at first, as useful, though irregular, partisans, brought an early discredit on the victory to which they had contributed. The Reformer's suspicion of these doubtful allies was first awakened by the facility with which they urged their conquests over the established opinions of the Christian world beyond the limits at which he had himself paused. He looked with distrust on their exemption from the pangs and throes with which the birth of his own doctrines had been accompanied in his own bosom. He perceived in them none of the caution, self-distrust, and humility, which he wisely judged inseparable from the honest pursuit of truth. Their claims to an immediate intercourse with heaven appeared to him an impious pretension; for he judged that it is only as attempered through many a gross intervening medium, that Divine light can be received at all into the human understanding.

Carlostadt, one of the professors at Wittemberg, was the leader of the Illuminati at that university. The influence of Luther procured his expulsion to Jena, where he established a printing-press.

But the maxims of toleration are not taught in the school of successful polemics ; and the secular arm was invoked to silence an appeal to the world at large against a new papal authority. The debate from which Luther thus excluded others he could not deny to himself ; for he shrunk from no inquiry and dreaded no man's prowess. A controversial passage at arms accordingly took place between the Reformer and his refractory pupil. It is needless to add that they separated, each more firmly convinced of the errors of his opponent. The taunt of fearing an open encounter with truth, Luther repelled with indignation and spirit. He invited Carlostadt to publish freely whatever he thought fit, and the challenge being accepted, he placed in his hands a florin, as a kind of wager of battle. It was received with equal frankness. The combatants grasped each other's hands, drank mutual pledges in a solemn cup, and parted to engage in hostilities more serious than such greetings might have seemed to augur. Luther had the spirit of a martyr, and was not quite exempt from that of a persecutor. Driven from one city to another, Carlostadt at last found refuge at Basle ; and thence assailed his adversary with a rapid succession of pamphlets, and with such pleasing appellatives as "twofold Papist," "ally of Antichrist," and so forth. They were answered with equal fertility, and with no greater moderation. "The devil," says Luther, "held his tongue till I won him over with a florin. It was money well laid out. I do not regret it."

He now advocated the cause of social order, and exposed the dangers of ignorant innovators, assailing these new enemies with his old weapons. "It will never do to jest with Mr All-the-World (*Herr omnes*). To keep that formidable person quiet, God had established lawful authority. It is His pleasure that there should be order amongst us here." "They cry out, The Bible ! the Bible ! —Bibel ! Bubel ! Babel !"

From that sacred source many arguments had been drawn to prove that all good Christians were bound, in imitation of the great Jewish lawgiver, to overthrow and deface the statues with which the Papists had embellished the sacred edifices. Luther strenuously resisted both the opinion and the practice ; maintaining that the Scriptures nowhere prohibit the use of images, except such as were designed as a representation or symbol of Deity.

But to the war with objects designed (however injudiciously) to aid the imagination, and to enliven the affections, Carlostadt and his partisans united that mysticism which teaches that the mind, thus deprived of all external and sensible supports, should raise itself to a height of spiritual contemplation and repose, where, all

other objects being banished, and all other sounds unheard, and all other thoughts expelled, the Divine Being will directly manifest himself, and disclose His will by a voice silent and inarticulate, and yet distinctly intelligible. Luther handles this sublime nonsense as it well deserved. "The devil," he says (for this is his universal solvent), "opens his large mouth, and roars out, Spirit! spirit! spirit! destroying the while all roads, bridges, scaling ladders, and paths, by which spirit can enter; namely, the visible order established by God in holy baptism, in outward forms, and in His own word. They would have you mount the clouds and ride the winds, telling you neither how, nor when, nor where, nor which. All this they leave you to discover for yourself."

Carlostact was an image breaker and a mystic, but he was something more. He had adopted the opinion of Zuingle and Ocolampadius on the Holy Communion,—receiving as an emblem, and as nothing else, the sacred elements in which the Roman Catholic Church, after the words of consecration, recognises the very body and blood of the Divine Redeemer. He was, therefore, supported by the whole body of Swiss reformers. Luther, "chained down," as he expresses it, "by the sacred text," to the doctrine of the real presence, had ardently desired to be enfranchised from this opinion. "As often as he felt within himself the strivings of the old Adam, he was but too violently drawn to adopt the Swiss interpretation." "But if we take counsel with reason, we shall no longer believe any mystery." He had, however, consulted this dangerous guide too long, thus easily to shake off her company. The text taught him one real presence, his reason assured him of another; and so he required his disciples to admit and believe both. They obeyed, though at the expense of a schism among the Reformers, of which it is difficult to say whether it occasioned more distress to themselves, or more exultation to their common enemies.

This is the first and greatest of those "Variations" of which the history has been written with such inimitable eloquence. Nothing short of the most obtuse prejudice could deny to Bossuet the praise of having brought to religious controversy every quality which can render it either formidable or attractive;—a style of such transparent perspicuity as would impart delight to the study of the Year Books, if they could be rewritten in it; a sagacity which nothing escapes; and a fervour of thought and feeling so intense, as to breathe and burn not only without the use of vehement or opprobrious words, but through a diction invariably calm and simple; and a mass of learning so vast and so perfectly digested as to be visible everywhere without producing the slightest encumbrance or

embarrassment. To quote from Mr Hallam's History of the Middle Ages :—" Nothing, perhaps, in polemical eloquence is so splendid as the chapter on Luther's theological tenets. The Eagle of Meaux is there truly seen, lordly of form, fierce of eye, terrible in his beak and claws,"—a graphic and not unmerited tribute to the prowess of this formidable adversary. But the triumph which it appears to concede to him may not be so readily acknowledged.

The argument of the "Variations" rests on the postulate, that a religion of Divine origin must have provided some resource for excluding uncertainty on every debatable point of belief or practice. Now, it must be vain to search for this steadfast light amongst those who were at variance on so many vital questions. The required *Ductor Dubitantium* could, therefore, be found only in the venerable form of the Catholic Church, whose oracles, everywhere accessible and never silent, had, from age to age, delivered to the faithful the same invariable truths in one continuous strain of perfect and unbroken harmony.

Much as the real contrast has been exaggerated by the most subtle disputant of modern times, it would be futile to deny or to extenuate the glaring inconsistencies of the Reformers with each other, and with themselves. Protestantism may well endure an avowal which leaves her foundations unimpaired. Bossuet has disproved the existence of a miracle which no one alleges. He has incontrovertibly established that the laws of nature were *not* suspended in favour of Luther and his associates. He has shown, with inimitable address and eloquence, that, within the precincts of moral science, human reason must toil in vain for demonstrative certainties; and that, in such studies, they who would adopt the same general results, and co-operate for one common end, must be content to rest very far short of an absolute identity of opinion.

But there is a deep and impassable gulf between these premises and the inference deduced from them. The stupendous miracle of a traditional unanimity for fifteen hundred years amongst the members of the Christian Church, at once unattested by any authentic evidence, and refuted by irresistible proofs, is opposed as much to the whole economy of the moral government of the world, as it is to human experience. It was, indeed, easy to silence dissent by terror; to disguise real differences beneath conventional symbols; to divert the attention of the incurious by a gorgeous pageantry; and to disarm the inquisitive at one time by golden preferments, and at another by specious compromises: and it was easy to allege this timid, or blind, or selfish acquiescence in spiritual despotism, as a general consent to the authority, and as a spontaneous

adoption of the tenets, of the dominant priesthood. But so soon as men really began to think, it was impossible that they should think alike. When suffrages were demanded, and not acclamations, there was at once an end of unanimity. With mental freedom came doubt, and debate, and sharp dissension. The indispensable conditions of human improvement were now to be fulfilled. It was discovered that religious knowledge, like all other knowledge, and religious agreement, like all other agreement, were blessings which, like all other blessings, must be purchased at a price.

Luther dispelled the illusion that man's noblest science may be attained, his first interests secured, and his most sacred duties discharged, except in the strenuous exercise of the best faculties of his nature. He was early taught that they who submit themselves to this Divine ordinance, are cut off from the intellectual repose which rewards a prostrate submission to human authority ; that they must conduct the search of truth through many a bitter disappointment, and many a humiliating retractation, and many a weary strife ; and that they must brace their nerves and strain their mental powers to the task, with sleepless diligence,—attended and sustained the while by singleness of purpose, by candour, by hope, by humility, and by devotion. When this severe lesson had been learned, the Reformers, boldly, nay, passionately, avowed their mutual differences. The imperfect vision, and unsteady gait, of eyes long excluded from the light, and of limbs long debarred from exercise, drew on them the taunts and contumelies of those whose bondage they had dared to reject. But the sarcasms even of Erasmus, the eloquence even of Bossuet, were impotent against such antagonists. Centuries rolled on their appointed course of controversy, of prejudice, of persecution, and of long-suffering. Nor was that sharp conflict endured in vain. Slowly, indeed, but steadfastly, the Catholic and benignant spirit of the Gospel reappeared, and resumed its influence in the Christian world. The rights of conscience, and the principles of toleration, were acknowledged. Some vehement disputes were consigned to well-merited neglect. The Church of Rome herself silently adopted much of the temper, whilst anathematising the tenets of the Reformers ; and if the dominion of peace and charity be still imperfect and precarious, yet there is a brighter prospect of their universal empire than has ever before dawned on the nations of Christendom. The Eagle of Meaux, had he been reserved for the nineteenth century, would have laid aside "the terrors of his beak, the lightnings of his eye," and would have winged his lordly flight to regions elevated far above those over which it is his glory to have spread war and consternation.

These, however, are conclusions which, in Luther's age, were beyond the reach of human foresight. It was at that time supposed that all men might at once freely discuss, and unanimously interpret, the meaning of the inspired volume. The trial of the experiment brought to light many essential variations, but still more in which the verbal exceeded the real difference; and such was, perhaps, the case with the Sacramentarian controversy. The objection to Luther's doctrine of Consubstantiation, was not that it was opposed to the reason of man, nor even that it was contradicted by the evidence of his senses; but that no intelligible meaning could be assigned to any of the combinations of words in which it was expressed. It might be no difficult task to be persuaded that whatever so great a doctor taught, on so high a point of theology, must be a truth;—just as the believers in George Psalmanazer may have been firmly assured of the verity of the statements he addressed to them in the language of Formosa. But the Lutheran doctrine could hardly have been more obscure, if it had been delivered in the Formosa, instead of the Latin or the German tongue. To all common apprehension, it appeared nothing less than the simultaneous affirmation and denial of the very same thing. In this respect it closely resembled the kindred doctrine of the Church of Rome. Yet who would indulge in so presumptuous a bigotry as to impute to the long unbroken succession of powerful and astute minds which have adorned the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches, the extravagance of having substituted unmeaning sounds for a definite sense, on so momentous an article of their respective creeds? The consequence may be avoided by a much more rational supposition. It is, that the learned of both communions used the words in which that article is denounced, in a sense widely remote from that which they usually bear. The proof of this hypothesis would be more easy than attractive; nor would it be a difficult, though an equally uninviting office, to show that Zuingli and his followers indulged themselves in a corresponding freedom with human language. The dispute, however, proceeded too rapidly to be overtaken or arrested by definitions; which, had they preceded, instead of following the controversy, might have stifled in its birth many a goodly folio.

The minds of men were rudely called away from these subtleties. Throughout the west of Germany, the peasants rose in a sudden and desperate revolt against their lords, under the guidance of Goetz of the "Iron Hand." If neither animated by the principles nor guided by the precepts of the Gospel, the insurgents at least avowed their adherence to the party then called Evangelical, and justified their conduct by an appeal to the doctrines of the Reformers. Yet

this fearful disruption of the bands of society was provoked neither by speculative opinions, nor by imaginary wrongs. The grievances of the people were galling, palpable, and severe. They belonged to that class of social evils over which the advancing light of truth and knowledge must always triumph, either by prompting timely concessions, or by provoking the rebound of the overstrained patience of mankind. Domestic slavery, feudal tenures, oppressive taxation, and a systematic denial of justice to the poor, occupied the first place in their catalogue of injuries; the forest laws and the exaction of small tithes, the second. The demand of the right to choose their own religious teachers, may not improbably have been added, to give to their cause the semblance of a less sublunary character; and rather in compliment to the spirit of the times, than from any very lively desire for instructors, who, they well knew, would discourage and rebuke their lawless violence.

Such a monitor was Luther. He was at once too conspicuous and too ardent to remain a passive spectator of these tumults. The nobles arraigned him as the author of their calamities. The people invoked him as an arbiter in the dispute. He answered their appeal with more than papal dignity. A poor untitled priest asserted over the national mind of Germany a command more absolute than that of her thousand Princes and their Imperial head. He had little of the science of government, nor, in truth, of any other science. But his mind had been expanded by studies which give wisdom even to the simple. His understanding was invigorated by habitual converse with the inspired writings, and his soul had drunk deeply of their spirit. And therefore it was that from him Europe first heard those great social maxims which, though they now pass for elementary truths, were then as strange in theory as they were unknown in practice. He fearlessly maintained that the demands of the insurgents were just. He asserted the all-important though obvious truth, that power is confided to the rulers of mankind, not to gratify their caprice or selfishness, but as a sacred trust to be employed for the common good of society at large; and he denounced their injustice and rapacity with the same stern vehemence which he had formerly directed against the spiritual tyrants of the world.

For, in common with all who have caught the genius as well as the creed of Christianity, the readiest sympathies of Luther were with the poor, the destitute, and the oppressed; and, in contemplating the unequal distribution of the good things of life, he was not slowly roused to a generous indignation against those to whom the advantages of fortune had taught neither pity nor forbearance. But it was an emotion restrained and directed by far deeper thoughts

than visit the minds of sentimental patriots, or selfish demagogues. He depicted, in his own ardent and homely phrase, the guilt, the folly, and the miseries of civil war. He reminded the people of their ignorance and their faults. He bade them not to divert their attention from these, to scan the errors of their superiors. He drew from the evangelical precepts of patience, meekness, and long-suffering, every motive which could calm their agitated passions. He implored them not to dishonour the religion they professed; and showed that subordination in human society was a Divine ordinance, designed to promote, in different ways, the moral improvement of every rank, and the general happiness of all.

The authority, the courage, and the pathetic earnestness of the great Reformer were exerted in vain. Oppression which drives wise men mad, had closed the ears of the German peasantry to the advice even of Martin Luther; and they plunged into a contest more desperate in its character, and more fatal in its results, than any which stains the annals of the empire. He felt, with the utmost keenness, the reproach thus brought on the Reformation; nor may it be concealed, that at last his voice was raised in terrible indignation against the insurgents, by whom his pacific efforts had been defeated and his remonstrances despised. His old antagonist, Carlostadt, was charged with a guilty participation in the revolt, and in his distress appealed to the much-reviled Consubstantialist for protection. It was hardly in human nature, certainly not in Luther's, to reject such a suppliant. The *odium theologicum* is, after all, rather a vituperative than a malignant affection, even its worst type; and Luther possessed, more than most polemics, the faculty of expelling from the soul the Demon of Wrath through the channel of the pen. He placed Carlostadt in safety, defended him from the charge of fostering rebellion, and demanded for him a fair trial and a patient hearing. His preternatural fate has been already noticed.

But a more formidable enemy was at hand. The supremacy of Erasmus in the world of letters was such as no other writer ever lived to enjoy. Literature had then an universal language, and the learned of all nations acknowledged him as their guide and model. In an age of intense mental activity, no other mind was so impatient of repose; at a period when freedom of thought was asserted with all the enthusiasm of new-born hope, he emulated the most sanguine of the insurgents against the ancient dynasties. The restorer, almost the inventor, of the popular interpretation of the Scriptures, he was excelled by few, if any, in the more ambitious science of biblical criticism. His philosophy (if, in deference to custom, it must so be called) was but the application to those inquiries in which the pre-

sent and future welfare of mankind is chiefly involved, of an admirable good sense, which penetrated sophisms under the most specious disguise, and repelled mere verbal subtleties, however imposing their pretensions, or however illustrious their patrons. Alternately a man of the world, and a recluse scholar, he was ever wide awake to the real business of life; even when engaged in those studies which usually conduct the mere prisoners of the cloister into dreamy and transcendental speculations. In his hands, the Latin language was bent to uses of which Cicero himself might have thought it incapable; and, without any barbarous innovations, became, almost for the first time, the vehicle of playful banter, and of high and mysterious doctrines, treated in a familiar and easy tone.

Of the two imperial virtues, industry and self-denial, the literary character of Erasmus was adorned by the first much more than by the second. Grasping at universal excellence and immediate renown, he poured out orations, verses, essays, dialogues, aphorisms, biographies, translations, and new editions of the classical writers, with a rapidity which at once dazzled the world, and exhausted himself. Deeply as the impress of his mind was fastened on his own generation, those only of his countless works retain their charm in later times which he regarded but as the pastime of a few leisure hours. Every one has read the "Colloquies," and admired their gay and graceful exposure of the frauds and credulity of his age. The "Praise of Folly" should never be separated from Holbein's etchings, without which the reader may now and then smile, but will hardly laugh. The "Ciceronianus" is one of those elaborate pleasantries which give pleasure only to the laborious. For neither as a wit, nor as a theologian, nor perhaps even as a critic, does Erasmus rank among master intellects; and in the other departments of literature no one has ventured to claim for him a very elevated station. His real glory is to have opened at once new channels of popular and of abstruse knowledge—to have guided the few, while he instructed the many—to have lived and written for noble ends—to have been surpassed by none in the compass of his learning, or the collective value of his works—and to have prepared the way for a mighty revolution, which it required moral qualities far loftier than his to accomplish.

For the soul of this great man did not partake of the energy of his intellectual faculties. He repeatedly confesses that he had none of the spirit of a martyr; and the acknowledgment is made in the tone of sarcasm, rather than in that of regret. He belonged to that class of actors on the scene of life, who have always appeared as the harbingers of great social changes;—men gifted with the power to

discern, and the hardihood to proclaim, truths of which they want the courage to encounter the infallible results ; who outrun their generation in thought, but lag behind it in action ; players at the sport of reform so long as reform itself appears at an indefinite distance ; more ostentatious of their mental superiority than anxious for the well-being of mankind ; dreaming that the dark page of history may hereafter become a fairy tale, in which enchantment will bring to pass a glorious catastrophe, unbought by intervening strife, and agony, and suffering ; and therefore overwhelmed with alarm when the edifice begins to totter, of which their own hands have sapped the foundation.

He was a Reformer, until the Reformation became a fearful reality ;—a jester at the bulwarks of the Papacy, until they began to give way ;—a propagator of the Scriptures, until men betook themselves to the study and the application of them ;—depreciating the mere outward forms of religion, until they had come to be estimated at their real value ;—in short, a learned, ingenious, benevolent, amiable, timid, irresolute man, who, though compelled to bear the responsibility, resigned to others the glory, of rescuing the human mind from the bondage of a thousand years. The distance between his career and that of Luther was, therefore, continually enlarging, until they at length moved in opposite directions, and met each other with mutual animosity. The Reformer foresaw and deprecated this collision : and Bossuet has condemned as servile the celebrated letter in which Luther endeavoured to avert the impending contest. In common with many of his censures of the great father of the Protestant Churches, this is evidently the result of prejudice. The letter was conceived with tenderness, and expressed with becoming dignity.

“I do not,” he says, “reproach you in your estrangements from us, fearing lest I should hinder the cause which you maintain against our common enemies the Papists. For the same reason, it gives me no displeasure that, in many of your works, you have sought to obtain their favour, or to appease their hostility, by assailing us with undeserved reproaches and sarcasms. It is obvious that God has not given you the energy or the courage requisite for an open and fearless attack on these monsters, nor am I of a temper to exact from you what is beyond your strength.”—“I have respected your infirmity, and that measure of the gifts of God which is in you. None can deny that you have promoted the cause of literature, thus opening the way to the right understanding of the Scriptures ; or that the endowment which you have thus received from God is magnificent and worthy of all admiration. Here is a just cause for

gratitude. I have never desired that you should quit your cautious and measured course to enter our camp. Great are the services you render by your genius and eloquence ; and as your heart fails you, it is best that you should serve God with such powers as He has given you. My only apprehension is, lest you should permit yourself to be dragged by our enemies to publish an attack upon our doctrines, for then I should be compelled to resist you to the face.”—“Things have now reached a point at which we should feel no anxiety for our cause, even though Erasmus himself should direct all his abilities against us. It is no wonder that our party should be impatient of your attacks. Human weakness is alarmed and oppressed by the weight of the name of Erasmus. Once to be lashed by Erasmus is a far different thing from being exposed to the assaults of all the Papists put together.”—“I have written all this in proof of my candour, and because I desire that God may impart to you a spirit worthy of your name. If that spirit be withheld, at least let me implore you to remain a mere spectator of our tragedy. Do not join your forces to our enemies. Abstain from writing against me, and I will write nothing against you.”

This lofty tone grated on the fastidious ear of the monarch of literature. He watched his opportunity, and inflicted a terrible revenge. To have attacked the doctrines of the Reformation would have been to hazard an unanswerable charge of inconsistency. But Luther, in exploring his path, had lost his way in the labyrinth of the question of free-will : and had published opinions which were nothing short of the avowal of absolute fatalism. In a treatise *De Libero Arbitrio*, Erasmus made a brilliant charge on this exposed part of his adversary's position ; exhausting all the resources of his sagacity, wit, and learning, to lower the theological character of the founder of the Lutheran Church. The Reformer staggered beneath this blow. For metaphysical debate he was ill prepared—to the learning of his antagonist he had no pretension—and to his wit could oppose nothing but indignant vehemence. His answer, *De Servo Arbitrio*, has been confessed, by his most ardent admirers, to have been but a feeble defence to his formidable enemy. The temper in which he conducted the dispute may be judged from the following example : “Erasmus, that king of amphibology, reposes calmly on his amphibological throne, cheats us with his ambiguous language, and claps his hands when he finds us entangled amongst his insidious tropes, like beasts of chase fallen into the toils. Then seizing the occasion for his rhetoric, he springs on his captive with loud cries, tearing, scourging, tormenting, and devoting you to the infernals, because, as it pleases him to say, his words have been understood in

a calumnious, scandalous, and Satanic sense, though it was his own design that they should be so taken. See him come on, creeping like a viper," &c., &c.

To the last, the sense of this defeat would appear to have clung to Luther. Accustomed to triumph in theological debate, he had been overthrown in the presence of abashed friends and exulting enemies; and the record of his familiar conversation bears deep traces of his keen remembrance of this humiliation. Many of the contumelious words ascribed to him on this subject, if they really fell from his lips, were probably some of those careless expressions in which most men indulge in the confidence of private life; and which, when quoted with the most literal exactness, assume in books published for the perusal of the world at large, a new meaning, and an undesigned emphasis. But there is little difficulty in receiving as authentic the words he is said to have pronounced when gazing on the picture of Erasmus—that it was, like himself, full of craft and malice; a comment on the countenance of that illustrious scholar, as depicted by Holbein, from which it is impossible altogether to dissent.

The contest with Erasmus and the Sacramentarians had taken place in that debatable land which religion and philosophy each claim for her own. But Luther was now to oppose a revolt not merely against philosophy and religion, but against decency and common sense. Equally astounding and scandalous were the antics which the minds of men performed when, exempt from the control of their ancient prepossessions, they had not as yet been brought into subjection to any other. Throughout the north of Germany and the Netherlands, there were found many converts to the belief, that a divorce might be effected between the virtues which the Gospel exacts, and those new relations between man and the Author of his being, which it at once creates and reveals; that, in short, it was possible to be at the same time a Christian and a knave. The connection between this sottish delirium and the rejection of infant baptism was an accident, or at most a caprice; and the name of Anabaptists, afterwards borne by so many wise and good men, is unfortunately, though indelibly, associated with the crazy rabble who first assumed or received it at Munster.

Herman Shapcœda, and after him Rothmann, were the first who instructed the inhabitants of that city in these ill-omened novelties; and they quickly gained the authority which any bold and unscrupulous guide may command, in times when hereditary creeds have been abandoned by those who want the capacity or the knowledge to shape out new opinions for themselves. "He who has not re

ceived adult baptism" (such was their argument) "is not a Christian; he who is not a Christian is an enemy of the truth; and it is the duty of the faithful to oppose the enemies of truth by all arms, spiritual or secular, within their reach."

Strong in this reasoning, and stronger still in numbers and in zeal, the Anabaptists of Munster declared open war against the Bishop, expelled the Catholics and Lutherans from the city, pillaged the churches and convents, and adopted as their watch-word the exhortation to repent, with which the Baptist of old had addressed the multitudes who surrounded him in the wilderness of Judæa.

If the insurgents did no works meet for repentance, they did many to be bitterly repented of. Their success was accompanied by cruelty, and followed by still fouler crimes. John de Mattheison, their chief prophet, established a community of goods, and committed to the flames every book except the Bible. John of Leyden, his successor, was a journeyman tailor, and, though at once a rogue and a fanatic, was not without some qualities which might have adorned a better cause. He conducted the defence of the city against the Bishop with as much skill and gallantry as if his accustomed seat had been, not the shop-board, but the saddle of a belted knight.

In the Scriptures, which his predecessor had exempted from the general conflagration, John found a sanction for the plurality of wives, and proofs that the sceptre of David had passed into his own hands. Twelve princes, representing the heads of the tribes of Israel, received from him authority to ascend the thrones of Europe; and apostles were sent to the great cities of Germany to propagate the new faith, and to attest the miracles of which they had been the witnesses. The doctrine they taught was less abstruse than might have been anticipated. It consisted in these propositions:—There have been four prophets: the true are King David and King John of Leyden; the false are the Pope and Martin Luther: but Luther is worse than the Pope.

While this pithy creed was inculcated without the walls, the most frightful debaucheries, and a strange burlesque on royalty, went on within. The king paraded the city, attended by his queen, and followed by a long train of led horses, caparisoned in gold brocade, a drawn sword being borne at his left hand, and a crown and Bible at his right. Seated on a throne in the public square, he received petitions from supplicants prostrate on the earth before him. Then followed impious parodies on the most sacred offices of the Christian worship, and scenes of profligacy which may not be described. To these, ere long, succeeded horrors which rendered the

New Jerusalem no inapt antitype of the old. The conquered king expiated his crimes on the scaffold,—enduring protracted and inhuman torments with a firmness which redeems his character from the abhorrence to which it had so many indisputable titles.

The story, however offensive, is not without interest. The rapidity with which the contagion of such stupid extravagances was propagated, and the apparent genuineness of the belief which a man of much fortitude and some acuteness at length yielded to the coinage of his own brain, are still curious, though not unfrequent, phenomena in the science of mental nosology. From his answers to the interrogatories which were proposed to him on his trial, it may be inferred that he was perfectly sane. His mind had been bewildered, partly by a depraved imagination and ungoverned appetites, and partly by his encounter with questions too large for his capacity, and with detached sentences from Holy Writ, of which he perceived neither the obvious sense nor the more sublime intimations. The memory of this guilty, presumptuous, and unhappy man, is rescued from oblivion by the audacity of his enterprise, and still more by the influence it exerted in arresting the progress of the Reformation.

The reproach, however unmerited, fell heavily on Luther. It is the common fate of all who dare to become leaders in the war against abuses, whether in religious or in political society, to be confounded with the baser sort of innovators, who at once hate their persons, and exaggerate and caricature the principles on which they have acted. For this penalty of rendering eminent services to the world every wise man is prepared; and every brave man endures it firmly, in the belief that a day is coming when his fame will be no longer oppressed by this unworthy association. Luther's faith in the ultimate deliverance of his good name from the obloquy cast on it by the madness of the Anabaptists, has but imperfectly been justified by the event. Long after his name belonged to the brightest page of human history, it found in Bossuet an antagonist as inveterate as Tetzels, more learned than Cajetan, and surpassing Erasmus himself in eloquence and ingenuity. Later still has arisen, in the person of Mr Hallam, a censor, whose religious opinions, unquestionable integrity, boundless knowledge, and admirable genius, give a fearful weight to his unfavourable judgment of the Father of the Reformation. Neither of these great writers, indeed, countenances the vulgar calumny which would identify the principles of Martin Luther with those of John of Leyden, although both of them arraign him in nearly the same terms, as having adopted and taught the Antinomian doctrines of which the Anabaptists exhibited the practical results.

The course we are shaping having brought us within reach of the whirlpools of this interminable controversy, roaring in endless circles over a dark and bottomless abyss, we cannot altogether yield to that natural impulse which would pass them by in cautious silence and with averted eyes. The *Labarum* of Luther was a banner inscribed with the legend "Justification by Faith"—the compendium, the essence, the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, of his distinctive creed. Of the many received or possible interpretations of this enigmatical symbol, that which Bossuet and Mr Hallam regard as most accordant with the views of the great standard-bearer himself, may be stated in the following terms :—If a man be firmly assured that his sins have been remitted by God, in the exercise of a mercy gratuitous and unmerited as it respects the offender himself, but accorded as the merited reward of the great propitiation, that man stands within the line which, even in this life, separates the objects of the Divine favour from the objects of the Divine displeasure. We believe this epitome of the Lutheran doctrine to be inaccurate, and, but for the greatness of the names by which it is sanctioned, we should have ventured to add superficial. In hazarding a different translation of Luther's meaning into the language of the world we live in, we do but oppose one assertion to another, leaving the whole weight of authority on the unfavourable side. The appeal ultimately lies to those whose studies have rendered them familiar with the Reformer's writings, and especially with his "Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians," which he was wont affectionately to call his Catherine de Bora. It must be conceded that they abound in expressions which, detached from the mass, would more than justify the censure of the historian of the "Literature of the Middle Ages." But no writer would be less fairly judged than Luther by isolated passages. Too impetuous to pause for exact discrimination, too long entangled in scholastic learning to have ever entirely recovered the natural relish for plain common sense, and compelled habitually to move in that turbid polemical region which pure and unrefracted light never visits, Luther, it must be confessed, is intelligible only to the impartial and laborious, and might almost be supposed to have courted those reproaches which he least deserves. Stripped of the technicalities of divinity and of the schools, his *Articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ* may, perhaps, with no material error, be thus explained.

Define the word "conviction" as a deliberate assent to the truth of any statement, and the word "persuasion" as the habitual reference to any such truth (real or supposed), as a rule of conduct ; and it follows, that we are "persuaded" of many things of which

we are not "convinced:" which is credulity or superstition. Thus, Cicero was "persuaded" of the sanctity of the mysteries which he celebrated as one of the College of Augurs. But the author of the Treatise *De Naturâ Deorum* had certainly no corresponding "convictions." We are "convinced" of much of which we are not "persuaded;" which, in theological language, is a "dead faith." The Marquis of Worcester deliberately assented to the truth, that the expansive force of steam could be applied to propel a vessel through the water; but wanting the necessary "persuasion," he left to others the praise of the discovery. Again, there are many propositions of which we are at once "convinced" and "persuaded," and this in the Lutheran style is a "living or saving faith." In this sense Columbus believed the true configuration of the earth, and launched his caravels to make known the two hemispheres to each other. It is by the aid of successful experiment engendering confidence; of habit producing facility; and of earnest thoughts quickening the imagination and kindling desire, that our opinions thus ripen into motives, and our theoretical "convictions" into active "persuasions." It is, therefore, nothing else than a contradiction in terms to speak of Christian faith as separable from moral virtue. The practical results of that, as of any other, motive, will vary directly as the intensity of the impulse, and inversely as the number and force of the impediments; but a motive which produces no motion, is the same thing as an attraction which does not draw, or as a propensity which does not incline. Far different as was the style in which Luther enounced his doctrine, the careful study of his writings will, we think, convince any dispassionate man that such was his real meaning. The faith of which he wrote was not a mere opinion, or a mere emotion. It was a mental energy, of slow but stately growth, of which an intellectual assent was the basis; high and holy tendencies the lofty superstructure; and a virtuous life the inevitable use and destination. In his own emphatic words: — "We do not say the sun *ought* to shine, a good tree *ought* to produce good fruit, seven and three *ought* to make ten. The sun shines by its own proper nature, without being bidden to do so; in the same manner the good tree yields its good fruit; seven and three have made ten from everlasting — it is needless to require them to do so hereafter."

If any credit be due to his great antagonist, Luther's doctrine of "Justification," when thus understood, is not entitled to the praise or the censure of novelty. Bossuet resents this claim as injurious to the Church of Rome, and as founded on an extravagant misrepresentation of her real doctrines. To ascribe to the great and wise

men of whom she justly boasts, or, indeed, to attribute to any one of sound mind the dogma or the dream which would deliberately transfer the ideas of the market to the relations between man and his Creator, is nothing better than an ignorant and uncharitable bigotry. To maintain that, till Luther dispelled the illusion, the Christian world regarded the good actions of this life as investing even him who performs them best with a *right* to demand from his Maker an eternity of uninterrupted and perfect bliss, is just as rational as to claim for him the detection of the universal error which has assigned to the animal man a place among the quadrupeds. There is in every human mind a certain portion of indestructible common sense. Small as this may be in most of us, it is yet enough to rescue us all, at least when sane and sober, from the stupidity of thinking, not only that the relations of creditor and debtor can really subsist between ourselves and Him who made us, but that a return of such inestimable value can be due from Him for such ephemeral and imperfect services as ours. People may talk foolishly on these matters; but no one seriously believes this. Luther slew no such monster, for there were none such to be slain. The error which he refuted was far more subtle and refined than this, and is copiously explained by Hooker, to whose splendid sermon on the subject it is a "good work" to refer any to whom it is unknown.

The celebrated thesis of "Justification by Faith," was peculiar to Luther and to his followers only in so far as he extricated it from a mass of superstitions by which it had been obscured, and assigned to it the prominence in his system to which it was justly entitled. But if his indignation was roused against those who had darkened this great truth, they by whom it was made an apology for lewdness and rapine were the objects of his scorn and abhorrence. His attack on the Anabaptists is conceived in terms so vigorous and so whimsical, that it is difficult to resist the temptation to exhibit some extracts. But who would needlessly disturb the mould beneath which lies interred and forgotten a mass of disgusting folly, which in a remote age exhaled a moral pestilence? Resolving all the sinister phenomena of life, by assuming the direct interference of the devil and his angels in the affairs of men, Luther thought that this influence had been most unskillfully employed at Munster. It was a *coup manqué* on the part of the great enemy of mankind. It showed that Satan was but a bungler at his art. The Evil One had been betrayed into this gross mistake, that the world might be on their guard against the more astute artifices to which he was about to resort: —

"These new theologians did not," he said, "explain themselves very clearly."—"Having hot soup in his mouth, the devil was obliged to content himself with mumbling out *mum mùm*, wishing doubtless to say something worse."—"The spirit which would deceive the world must not begin by yielding to the fascinations of woman, by grasping the emblems and honours of royalty, still less by cutting people's throats. This is too broad; rapacity and oppression can deceive no one. The real deceit will be practised by him who shall dress himself in mean apparel, assume a lamentable countenance, hang down his head, refuse money, abstain from meat, fly from woman as so much poison, disclaim all temporal authority, and reject all honours as damnable; and who then, creeping softly towards the throne, the sceptre, and the keys, shall pick them up and possess himself of them by stealth. Such is the man who would succeed, who would deceive the angels and the very elect. This would indeed be a splendid devil, with a plumage more gorgeous than the peacock or the pheasant. But thus impudently to seize the crown, to take not merely one wife, but as many as caprice or appetite suggests—oh! it is the conduct of a mere schoolboy devil, of a devil at his A B C; or rather, it is the true Satan—Satan, the learned and the crafty, but fettered by the hands of God with chains so heavy that he cannot move. It is to warn us, it is to teach us to fear his chastisements, before the field is thrown open to a more subtle devil, who will assail us no longer with A B C, but with the real, the difficult text. If this mere *devil*ing at his letters can do such things, what will he not do when he comes to act as a reasonable, knowing, skilful, lawyer-like, theological devil?"

These various contests produced in the mind of Luther the effects which painful experience invariably yields, when the search for truth, prompted by the love of truth, has been long and earnestly maintained. Advancing years brought with them an increase of candour, moderation, and charity. He had lived to see his principles strike their roots deeply through a large part of the Christian world, and he anticipated, with perhaps too sanguine hopes, their universal triumph. His unshaken reliance in them was attested by his dying breath. But he had also lived to witness the defection of some of his allies, and the guilt and folly of others. Prolonged inquiry had disclosed to him many difficulties which had been overlooked in the first ardour of the dispute, and he had become painfully convinced that the establishment of truth is an enterprise incomparably more arduous than the overthrow of error. His constitutional melancholy deepened into a more habitual sadness—his impetuosity gave way to a more serene and pensive temper—and as

the tide of life ebbed with still increasing swiftness, he was chiefly engaged in meditating on those cardinal and undisputed truths, on which the weary mind may securely repose, and the troubled heart be still.

The maturer thoughts of age could not, however, quell the rude vigour and fearless confidence which had borne him through his early contests. With little remaining fondness or patience for abstruse speculations, he was challenged to debate one of the more subtle points of theology. His answer cannot be too deeply pondered by polemics at large. "Should we not," he said, "get on better in this discussion with the assistance of a jug or two of beer?" The offended disputant retired,—“the devil,” observed Luther, “being a haughty spirit, who can bear anything better than being laughed at.”

This growing contempt for unprofitable questions was indicated by a corresponding decline in Luther's original estimate of the importance of some of the minor topics in debate with the Church of Rome. He was willing to consign to silence the question of the veneration due to the Saints. He suspended his judgment respecting prayers for the dead. He was ready to acquiesce in the practice of auricular confession, for the solace of those who regarded it as an essential religious observance. He advised Spalatin to do whatever he thought best respecting the elevation of the Host, deprecating only any positive rule on the subject. He held the established ceremonies to be useful, from the impression they left on gross and uncultivated minds. He was tolerant of images in the churches, and censured the whole race of image-breakers with his accustomed vehemence. Even the use of the vernacular tongue in public worship he considered as a convenient custom, not an indispensable rule. Carlostadt had insisted upon it as essential. “Oh, this is an incorrigible spirit,” replied the more tolerant Reformer; “for ever and for ever positive obligations and sins!”

But while his catholic spirit thus raised him above the exaggerated estimate of those external things which chiefly attracted the hostility of narrower minds, his sense of the value of those great truths in which he judged the essence of religion to consist, was acquiring increased intensity and depth. In common with Montaigne and Richard Baxter (names hardly to be associated on any other ground), he considered the Lord's Prayer as surpassing every other devotional exercise. “It is my prayer,” said Luther; “there is nothing like it.” In the same spirit, he preferred the Gospel of St John to all the other sacred books, as containing more of the language of Christ himself. As he felt, so he taught. He practised the most simple and elementary style of preaching. “If,” he said,

"in my sermons I thought of Melancthon and other doctors, I should do no good ; but I speak with perfect plainness for the ignorant, and that satisfies everybody. Such Greek, Latin, and Hebrew as I have, I reserve for the learned."—"Nothing is more agreeable or useful for a common audience than to preach on the duties and examples of Scripture. Sermons on grace and justification fall coldly on their ears." He taught that good and true theology consisted in the practice, the habit, and the life of the Christian graces—Christ being the foundation. "Such, however," he says, "is not our theology now-a-days. We have substituted for it a rational and speculative theology. This was not the case with David. He acknowledged his sins, and said, *Miserere mei Domine !*"

Luther's power of composition is, indeed, held very cheap by a judge so competent as Mr Hallam : nor is it easy to commend his more elaborate style. It was compared by himself to the earthquake and the wind which preceded the still small voice addressed to the prophet in the wilderness ; and is so turbulent, copious, and dogmatical, as to suggest the supposition that it was not written by his own hand, but dictated to an amanuensis, or perhaps to a class of submissive pupils, under the influence of extreme excitement. Obscure, redundant, and tautologous as these writings appear, they are still redeemed from neglect, not only by the mighty name of their author, but by that all-pervading vitality and downright earnestness which atone for the neglect of all the mere artifices of style ; and by that profound familiarity with the sacred oracles, which far more than compensates for the absence of that speculative wisdom which is drawn from lower sources.

But the Reformer's lighter and more occasional works not unfrequently breathe the very soul of eloquence. His language in these, ranges between colloquial homeliness and the highest dignity,—now condensed into vivid figures, and then diffused into copious amplification,—exhibiting the successive phases of his ardent, melancholy, playful, and heroic character in such rapid succession, and with such perfect harmony, as to resemble the harp of Dryden's Timothy, alternately touched and swept by the hand of the master—a performance so bold and so varied, as to scare the critic from the discharge of his office. The address, for example, to the Swabian insurgents and nobles, if not executed with the skill, is at least conceived in the spirit of a great orator. The universal testimony of all the most competent judges, attests the excellence of his translation of the Bible, and assigns to him in the literature of his country, a station corresponding to that of the great men to whom James committed the corresponding office in our own.

Bayle has left to the friends of Luther no duty to perform in the defence of his moral character, but that of appealing to the unanswerable reply which his Dictionary contains to the charges preferred against the Reformer by his enemies. One unhappy exception is indeed to be made. It is impossible to read without pain the names of Luther, Melancthon, and Bucer, amongst the subscribers to the address to the Landgrave of Hesse, on the subject of his intended polygamy. Those great but fallible men remind his Highness of the distinction between universal laws, and such as admit of dispensation in particular cases. They cannot publicly sanction polygamy. But his Highness is of a peculiar constitution, and is exhorted seriously to examine all the considerations laid before him ; yet, if he is absolutely resolved to marry a second time, it is their opinion that he should do so as secretly as possible ! Fearful is the energy with which the "Eagle of Meaux" pounces on this fatal error,—tearing to pieces the flimsy pretexts alleged in defence of such an evasion of the Christian code. The charge admits of no defence. To the inference drawn from it against the Reformer's doctrine, every Protestant has a conclusive answer. Whether in faith or in practice, he acknowledges no infallible Head but one.

But we have wandered far and wide from our proper subject. Where, all this while, is the story of Luther's education, of his visit to Rome, of the sale of Indulgences, of the denunciations of Tetzl, of the controversy with Eccius, the Diets of Worms and Augsburg, the citations before Cajetan and Charles, the papal excommunication, and the appeal to a general council ? These, and many other of the most momentous incidents of the Reformer's life, are recorded in M. D'Aubigné's work, from which our attention has been diverted by matters of less account, but perhaps a little less familiar.

It would be unpardonable, however, to pass over such a work with a merely ceremonious notice. The absolute merit of M. D'Aubigné's "Life of Martin Luther" is great, but the comparative value far greater. In the English language it has no competitor ; and, though Melancthon himself was the biographer of his friend, we believe that no foreign tongue contains so complete and impressive a narrative of these events.

It is true that M. D'Aubigné neither deserves nor claims a place amongst those historians, usually distinguished as philosophical. He does not aspire to illustrate the principles which determine or pervade the character, the policy, or the institutions of mankind. He arms himself with no dispassionate scepticism, and scarcely affects to be impartial. To tell his tale copiously and clearly, is the one object of his literary ambition. To exhibit the actors on the

scene of life, as the free but unconscious agents of the Divine Will, is the higher design with which he writes ; to trace the mysterious intervention of Providence in reforming the errors and abuses of the Christian Church is his immediate end ; and to exalt the name of Luther, his labour of love.

These purposes, as far as they are attainable, are effectually attained. M. D'Aubigné is a Protestant of the original stamp, and a Biographer of the old fashion ;—not a calm, candid, discriminating weigher and measurer of a great man's parts, but a warm-hearted champion of his glory, and a resolute apologist even for his errors ;—ready to do battle in his cause with all who shall impugn or derogate from his fame. His book is conceived in the spirit, and executed with all the vigour, of Dr M'Crie's "Life of Knox." He has all our lamented countryman's sincerity, all his deep research, more skill in composition, and a greater mastery of subordinate details ; along with the same inestimable faculty of carrying on his story from one stage to another, with an interest which never subsides, and a vivacity which knows no intermission. If he displays no familiarity with the moral sciences, he is no mean proficient in that art which reaches to perfection only in the Drama or the Romance. It is the art, not of inventing, but of discerning such incidents as impart life and animation to a narrative. For M. D'Aubigné is a writer of scrupulous veracity. He is at least an honest guide, though his prepossessions may be too strong to render him worthy of implicit confidence. They are such, however, as to make him the uncompromising and devoted advocate of those cardinal tenets on which Luther erected the edifice of the Reformation. To the one great article of the Faith on which the Reformer chiefly insisted in his assault on the Papacy, the eye of the Biographer is directed with scarcely less intentness. To this, every other truth is viewed as subordinate and secondary ; and although, on this favourite point of doctrine, M. D'Aubigné's meaning is too often obscured by declamation, yet must he be hailed by every genuine friend of the Reformation, as having raised a powerful voice in favour of one of the fundamental truths of the Gospel—truths which, so long as they are faithfully taught and diligently observed, will continue to form the great bulwarks of Christendom against the overweening estimate, and the despotic use, of human authority, in opposition to the authority of the Revealed Will of God.

THE FRENCH BENEDICTINES.

MIDDLETON and Gibbon rendered a real, however undesigned, service to Christianity, by attempting to prove that the rapid extension of the Primitive Church was merely the natural result of natural causes. For what better proof could be given of the Divine origin of any religion than by showing that it had at once overspread the civilised world, by the expansive power of an inherent aptitude to the nature and to the wants of mankind? By entering on a still wider range of inquiry, those great but disingenuous writers might have added much to the evidence of the fact they alleged, although at a still greater prejudice to the conclusion at which they aimed.

It is not predicted in the Old Testament that the progress of the Gospel should, to any great extent, be the result of any agency preternatural and opposed to ordinary experience; nor is any such fact alleged in any of the apostolical writings as having actually occurred. There is, indeed, no good reason to suppose that such miraculous though transient disturbances of the laws of the material or the moral world, would have long or powerfully controlled either the belief or the affections of mankind. The heavenly husbandman selected the kindliest soil and the most propitious season for sowing the grain of mustard seed; and so, as time rolled on, the adaptation of our faith to the character and the exigencies of our race was continually made manifest, though under new and ever-varying forms.

Thus the Church was at first Congregational, that by the agitation of the lowest strata of society, the superincumbent mass of corruption, idolatry, and mental servitude might be broken up—then Synodal or Presbyterian, that the tendency of separate societies to heresy and schism might be counteracted—then Episcopal, that in ages of extreme difficulty and peril, the whole body might act in concert and with decision—then Papal, that it might oppose a visible unity to the armies of the Crescent and the barbarians of the North—then Monastic, that learning, art, and piety might be preserved in impregnable retreats amidst the deluge of ignorance and

of feudal oppression—then Scholastic, that the human mind might be educated for a return to a sounder knowledge, and to primitive doctrine—then Protestant, that the soul might be emancipated from error, superstition, and spiritual despotism—then *partially* Reformed, in the very bosom of the Papacy, lest that emancipation should hurry the whole of Christendom into precipitate change and lawless anarchy—and then at length Philosophical, to prove that as there are no depths of sin or misery to which the healing of the Gospel cannot reach, so there are no heights of speculation to which the wisdom of the Gospel cannot ascend.

Believing thus in the Perpetuity as well as on the Catholicity of the Church, and judging that she is still the same in spirit throughout all ages, although, in her external developments, flexible to the varying necessities of all, we have ventured on some former occasions, and are again about to assert, for “the pure and reformed branches” of it in England and in Scotland, an alliance with the heroes of the faith in remote times, and in less enlightened countries; esteeming that to be the best Protestantism which, while it frankly condemns the errors of other Christian societies, yet claims fellowship with the piety, the wisdom, and the love, which, in the midst of these errors, have attested the Divine original of them all.

If, according to the advice which on some of those occasions we have presumed to offer to those who are studious of such subjects, there be among us any scholar meditating a Protestant history of the Monastic Orders, he will find materials for a curious chapter in the correspondence of the French Benedictines of the reign of Louis XIV. which was published in the year 1846 by M. Valery at Paris. In that fraternity light and darkness succeeded each other by a law the reverse of that which obtained in Europe at large. From the promulgation of their rule in the sixth century, their monasteries were comparatively illuminated amidst the general gloom of the dark ages. But when the sun arose on the outer world, its beams scarcely penetrated their cloisters; nor did they hail the returning dawn of literature and science until the day was glowing all around them in meridian splendour. Then, however, passing at one vault from the haze of twilight to the radiance of noon, they won the wreath of superior learning, even in the times of Tillemont and Du Cange—though resigning the palm of genius to Bourdaloue, Bossuet, and Pascal. Thus the three great epochs of their annals are denoted by the growth, the obscuration, and the revival of their intellectual eminence. M. Valery’s volumes illustrate the third and last stage of this progress, which cannot, however, be understood without a rapid glance at each of the two preceding stages.

“But why,” it may be asked, “direct the eye at all to the mouldering records of monastic superstition, self-indulgence, and hypocrisy?” Why, indeed? From contemplating the mere debasement of any of the great families of man, no images can be gathered to delight the fancy, nor any examples to move or to invigorate the heart. And doubtless he who seeks for such knowledge, may find in the chronicles of the convent a fearful disclosure of the depths of sin and folly into which multitudes of our brethren have plunged, under the pretence of more than human sanctity. But the same legends will supply some better lessons, to him who reads books that he may learn to love and to benefit his fellow-men. They will teach him that as, in Judæa, the temple, so, in Christendom, the monastery, was the ark, freighted during the deluge, with the destinies of the Church and of the world,—that there our own spiritual and intellectual ancestry found shelter amidst the tempest,—that there were matured those powers of mind which gradually infused harmony and order into the warring elements of the European Commonwealth,—and that there many of the noblest ornaments of our common Christianity were trained to instruct, to govern, and to bless the nations of the West.

Guided by the maxim “that whatever any one saint records of any other saint must be true,” we glide easily over the enchanted land along which Domnus Johannes Mabillon conducts the readers of the earlier parts of his wondrous compilations; receiving submissively the assurance that St Benedict sang eucharistic hymns in his mother’s womb—raised a dead child to life—caused his pupil Maurus to tread the water dry-shod—untied by a word the knotted cords with which an Arian Goth (Zalla by name) had bound an honest rustic—cast out of one monk a demon who had assumed the disguise of a farrier—rendered visible to another a concealed dragon, who was secretly tempting him to desert his monastery—and, by laying a consecrated wafer on the bosom of a third, enabled him to repose in a grave which till then had continually cast him out;—for all these facts the great annalist relates of his patriarch St Benedict, on the authority of the pontiff (first of that name) St Gregory. If, however, the record had contained no better things than these, the memorial of Benedict would long since have perished with him.

His authentic biography is comprised in a very few words. He was born towards the end of the fifth century, at Nursia, in the duchy of Spoleto. His mother died in giving him birth. He was sent to Rome for his education by his father, a member of the Anician family, which Claudian has celebrated; but was driven from the city by the invasions of Odoacer and Theodoric to the Mons

Subiacus, where, while yet a beardless youth, he took up his abode as a hermit. Like Jerome, he was haunted in his solitude by the too vivid remembrance of a Roman lady ; and subdued his voluptuous imagination by rolling his naked body among the thorns. The fame of such premature sanctity recommended him to the monks of the neighbouring monastery as their abbot ; but scarcely had he assumed the office when, disgusted by the rigours of his discipline, the electors attempted to get rid of him by poison. Returning to his hermitage, he soon found himself in the centre of several rude huts, erected in his vicinity by other fugitives from the world, who acknowledged him as the superior of this monastic village. But their misconduct compelled him again to seek a new retirement ; which he found at Monte Casino, on the frontiers of the Abbruzzi. There, attended by some of his pupils and former associates, he passed the remainder of his life—composing his rule, and establishing the Order which, at the distance of thirteen centuries, still retains his name and acknowledges his authority. He died in the year 543, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

To the intercourse of Benedict with the refractory monks of Subiaco, may perhaps be traced the basis of his system. It probably revealed to him the fact that Indolence, Self-will, and Selfishness are the three archdæmons of the cloister ; and suggested the inference that Industry, Obedience, and Community of goods are the antagonist powers which ought to govern there. But the comprehensiveness of thought with which he so exhausted the science of monastic polity, that all subsequent rules have been nothing more than modifications of his own,—the prescience with which he reconciled conventual franchises with abbatial dominion,—the skill with which he at once concentrated and diffused power among the different members of his Order, according as the objects in view were general or local,—and the deep insight into the human heart by which he rendered myriads of men and women, during more than thirty successive generations, the spontaneous instruments of his purposes,—these all unite to prove that profound genius, extensive knowledge, and earnest meditation, had raised him to the very first rank of uninspired legislators. His disciples, indeed, find in his legislative wisdom a conclusive proof that he wrote and acted under a divine impulse. Even to those who reject this solution it is still a phænomenon affording ample exercise for a liberal curiosity.

That the Benedictine statutes remain to this day a living code, written in the hearts of multitudes in every province of the Christian world, is chiefly perhaps to be ascribed to the inflexible rigour

with which they annihilated the cares and responsibilities of freedom. To the baser sort no yoke is so galling as that of self-control ; no deliverance so welcome as that of being handsomely rid of free agency. With such men mental slavery readily becomes a habit, a fashion, and a pride. To the abject many, the abdication of self-government is a willing sacrifice. It is reserved for the nobler few to rise to the arduous virtues of using wisely the gifts which God bestows, and walking courageously, though circumspectly and humbly, in the light which God vouchsafes.

And by the abject many, though often under the guidance of the nobler few, were peopled the cells of Monte Casino and her affiliated convents. Their gates were thrown open to men of every rank, in whom the abbot or prior of the house could discover the marks of a genuine vocation. To exclude any such candidate, though a pauper or a slave, would have been condemned by Benedict, in the words and spirit of Augustine, as *grave delictum*. In those sacred enclosures, therefore, many poor and illiterate brethren found a refuge. But they were distinguished from the rest as *conversi*,—that is, as persons destined neither for the priesthood nor the tonsure, but bound to labour for the society as husbandmen, shepherds, artisans, or domestic servants.

In the whirl and uproar of the handicrafts of our own day, it is difficult to imagine the noiseless spectacle which in those ages so often caught the eye, as it gazed on the secluded abbey and the adjacent grange. In black tunics, the mementos of death, and in leathern girdles, the emblems of chastity, might then be seen carters silently yoking their bullocks to the team, and driving them in silence to the field, — or shepherds interchanging some inevitable whispers while they watched their flocks, — or vine-dressers pruning the fruit of which they might neither taste nor speak, — or wheelwrights, carpenters, and masons plying their trades like the inmates of some deaf and dumb asylum, — and all pausing from their labours as the convent bell, sounding the hours of primes, or nones, or vespers, summoned them to join in spirit, even when they could not repair in person, to those sacred offices. Around the monastic workshop might be observed the belt of cultivated land, continually encroaching on the adjacent forest ; and the passer-by might trace to the toils of these mute workmen the opening of roads, the draining of marshes, the herds grazing, and the harvests waving, in security, under the shelter of ecclesiastical privileges which even the Vandal and the Ostrogoth regarded with respect. Our own annual agricultural meetings, with their implements and their prizes, their short horns and their long speeches, must carry back their

economic genealogy to those husbandmen who, with dismal aspect, brawny arms, and compressed lips, first taught the conquerors of Rome the science in which Columella and Virgil had instructed the ancient Romans.

A similar pedigree must be assigned to our academies of painting, sculpture, architecture, and music. The fine arts are merely imitative in their infancy ; though as they become mature, they also become symbolical. And this maturity is first attained by the architect, because he ministers to a want more urgent than the rest,—because, in the order of time, the edifice must precede the works designed for its embellishment,—and because finding in nature no models except for the details of his performance, he must, from the first, be inventive in the composition of it. Thus the children of Benedict, when contemplating their lofty avenues, sacred to meditation—and the mellowed lights streaming through the foliage—and the flowers clustering in the conventual garden—and the pendulous stalactites of the neighbouring grottoes,—conceived of a Christian temple in which objects resembling these, though hewn out of imperishable stone, and carved into enduring forms, might be combined and grouped together into one glorious whole. With a ritual addressed to the eye rather than to the ear—a sacred pantomime, of which the sacrifice of the mass was the action, the priests the actors, and the high altar the stage,—nothing more was requisite to the solemn exhibition but the cathedral, as its appropriate theatre. It arose, therefore, not the servile representation of any one natural object, but the majestic combination of the forms of many ; and full of mystic significance, in the cruciform plan, the lofty arch, the oriel windows, the lateral chapels, and the central elevation. Not a groining, a mullion, or a tracery was there, in which the initiated eye did not read some masonic enigma, some ghostly counsel, or some inarticulate summons to confession, to penitence, or to prayer.

Every niche without, and every shrine within, these sanctuaries, was adorned with images of their tutelary saints ; and especially of Her who is supreme among the demigods of this celestial hierarchy. But, instead of rising to the impersonation of holiness, beauty, or power, in these human forms, the monkish sculptors were content to copy the indifferent models of humanity within their reach ; and the statues, busts, and reliefs which, in subsequent times, fell beneath the blows of Protestant Iconoclasts, had little if any value but that which belonged to their peculiar locality and their accidental associations. In painting also, whether encaustic, in fresco, or on wood, the performances of the early Benedictine artists were equally humble. In order to give out their visible poetry, the chisel and

the pencil must be guided by minds conversant with the cares and the enjoyments of life ; for it is by such minds only that the living soul which animates mute nature can ever be perceived ; or can be expressed in the delineation of realities, whether animated or inanimate. In ecclesiastical and conventual architecture, and in that art alone, the monks exhausted their creative imagination ; covering Europe with monuments of their science in statics and dynamics, and with monuments of that plastic genius, which, from an infinity of elaborate, incongruous, and often worthless details, knew how to evoke one sublime and harmonious whole. In those august shrines, if anywhere on earth, the spirit of criticism is silenced by the belief that the adorations of men are mingled in blest accord with the hallelujahs of heaven.

To animate that belief, the Benedictine musicians produced those chants which, when long afterwards combined by Palestrina into the Mass of Pope Marcellus, were hailed with rapture by the Roman Conclave and the Fathers of Trent, as the golden links which bind together in an indissoluble union the supplications of the Militant Church and the thanksgivings of the Church Triumphant.

“Lusts of the imagination !” exclaimed, and may yet exclaim, the indignant pulpits of Scotland and Geneva—“lusts as hostile to the purity of the Christian Faith as the grosser lusts of the flesh or the emptiest vanities of life.” Hard words these for our restorers of church architecture in mediæval splendour ! Let the Camden Society, the Lord of Wilton, and the benchers of the Temple look to it ; while we, all innocent of any such sumptuous designs—her Majesty’s Church Building Commissioners themselves not more so—refer to these Benedictine prodigies only as illustrating a memorable passage in Benedictine History.

But art was regarded by the fathers of that Order rather as the delight than as the serious occupation of their brotherhood. With a self-reliance as just as that of the great philosopher, if not as sublime, they took to themselves all knowledge as their proper province. Their rule assigned an eminent rank among monastic virtues to the guardianship and multiplication of valuable manuscripts. It taught the copyist of a holy book to think of himself as at once a pupil and a teacher—as a missionary while seated at his desk—using each finger as a tongue—inflicting on the Spirit of Evil a deadly wound at each successive line—and as baffling, with the pen, the dread enemy who smiles at the impotent hostility of every other weapon grasped by the hand of mortal man. In each Benedictine monastery a chamber was set apart for the discharge of this sacred office. In this *Scriptorium* some of the monks plied their pens assiduously, and in

profound silence, to produce faultless transcripts of the best originals. To others was committed the care of revising the text of such works as were then held in the highest esteem. Charlemagne himself assigned to the Benedictine Alcuin the high office of preparing, from the various sources within his reach, a perfect Codex of the Holy Scriptures. For what remains to us of Pliny, Sallust, and Macrobius, and for the orations against Verres, we are indebted to their literary zeal. A tribute of writing materials at the commencement of each novitiate, and another of books at its close, with an annual impost of manuscripts on the inferior houses, were continually augmenting the libraries of their greater convents. How extensive and how valuable such collections became, may be inferred from the directions given by the Benedictine Cassiodorus for the guidance of his brethren in their studies. He had collected, and he enjoins them to read, the Greek and Latin Fathers, the Church historians, the geographers and grammarians whose works were then extant and in repute, with various medical books, for the assistance of those monks to whom the care of the infirmary was confided. Whoever will consult the "*Historia Rei Literariæ Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*," by their historiographer Magnoaldus Zeigelbauer, may rapidly accumulate the most conclusive proofs, that by their Order were either laid or preserved the foundations of all the eminent schools of learning of Modern Europe.

The greatness of the Benedictines did not, however, consist either in their agricultural skill, their prodigies of architecture, or their priceless libraries; but in their parentage of countless men and women, illustrious for active piety—for wisdom in the government of mankind—for profound learning—and for that contemplative spirit, which discovers within the soul itself things beyond the limits of the perceptible creation. Such, indeed, is the number of these worthies, that, if every page at our disposal were a volume, and every such volume as ponderous as our old acquaintance, Scapula, space would fail us to render justice to the achievements of the half of them. We cannot, however, pass by this goodly fellowship without a transient glance at one normal type, at the least, of each of these various forms of Benedictine heroism. For that purpose we need scarcely wander from the annals of our own land.

In the Benedictine abbey of Nutsall, near Winchester, Poetry, History, Rhetoric, and the Holy Scriptures were taught, in the beginning of the eighth century, by a monk whom his fellow-countryman called Winfred, but whom the Church honours under the name of Boniface. He was born at Crediton, in Devonshire, of noble and wealthy parents, who had reluctantly yielded to his wish to embrace

the monastic state. Hardly, however, had he reached middle life, when his associates at Nutsall discovered that he was dissatisfied with the pursuits by which their own thoughts were engrossed. As, in his evening meditations, he paced the long conventual avenue of lime trees, or as, in the night-watches, he knelt before the crucifix suspended in his cell, he was still conscious of a voice, audible though inarticulate, which repeated to him the Divine injunction, to "go and preach the Gospel to all nations." Then, in mental vision, was seen stretching out before him the land of his German ancestry; where, beneath the veil of the customs described by Tacitus, was concealed an idolatry of which the historian had neither depicted, nor probably conjectured, the abominations. To encounter Satan in this stronghold, became successively the day-dream, the passion, and the fixed resolve of Boniface; until at length abandoning, for this holy war, the studious repose for which he had already abandoned the world, he appeared, in his thirty-sixth year, a solitary and unbefriended missionary, traversing the marshy sands and the primæval forests of Friesland. But Charles Martel was already there,—the leader in a far different contest; nor, while the Christian Mayor of the Palace was striking down the Pagans with his battle-axe, could the pathetic entreaties of the Benedictine Monk induce them to bow down to the banner of the Cross. He therefore returned to Nutsall, not with diminished zeal, but with increased knowledge. He had now learnt that his success must depend on the conduct of the secular and spiritual rulers of mankind, and on his own connection with them.

The chapter of his monastery chose him as their abbot; but, at his own request, the Bishop of Winchester annulled the election. Then, quitting for ever his native England, Boniface pursued his way to Rome, to solicit the aid of Pope Gregory II., in his efforts for the conversion of the German people.

Armed with a papal commission, a papal blessing, and a good store of relics, Boniface again appeared in Friesland, where Charles Martel was now the undisputed master. Victory had rendered him devout; and he gladly countenanced the labours of the monk, to bring his new subjects within the fold of the Christian Church. So ardent, indeed, was his zeal for this great work, that the destined author of it was soon compelled to migrate into Saxony, as the only means of escaping the unwelcome command of the conqueror to fix his residence in Friesland, and there to assume the coadjutorship and succession to the Bishop of Utrecht.

The missionary labours of Boniface, interrupted only by three short visits to Rome, were prolonged over a period of more than

thirty-six years ; and were extended over all the territories between the Elbe, the Rhine, and the Ocean. At Rome he sought and found all the support which papal authority, zeal, and wisdom could afford him. Gregory II. consecrated him a bishop, though without a diocese. Gregory III. raised him to be the Archbishop and Primate of all Germany ; with power to establish bishoprics there at his discretion. The same pontiff afterwards nominated him Legate of the Holy See, in Germany and France. To these distinctions Pope Zachary added the Archbishopric of Mentz, then first constituted the metropolis of the German churches. Last of all was bestowed on him the singular privilege of appointing his own successor in his primacy.

There have been churchmen to whom such a memento of the vanity of even the highest ecclesiastical dignities would have afforded but an equivocal satisfaction. To Boniface the remembrance of the shortness of life was not only familiar, but welcome. The treatise of Ambrose on the advantages of death was his constant companion. It had taught him to regard his successive promotions but as the means of preparing his mind for the joyful resignation of them all. His seventy-fourth year was now completed. For the spiritual care of his converts he had established seven new bishoprics ; and had built and endowed many monasteries for the advancement of piety and learning among them. At last, abdicating his own mitre in favour of Lullus, a monk of Malmesbury, he solemnly devoted his remaining days to that office of a missionary, which he justly esteemed as far nobler than any symbolised by the crosier, the purple, or the tiara. Girding round him his black Benedictine habit, and depositing his Ambrose, "*De Bono Mortis*," in the folds of it, he once more travelled to Friesland ; and, pitching his tent on the banks of a small rivulet, awaited there the arrival of a body of neophytes, whom he had summoned to receive at his hands the rite of confirmation.

Ere long a multitude appeared in the distance, advancing towards the tent ; not, however, with the lowly demeanour of Christian converts drawing near to their bishop, but carrying deadly weapons, and announcing by their cries and gestures that they were Pagans, sworn to avenge their injured deities against the arch-enemy of their worship. The servants of Boniface drew their swords in his defence ; but calmly, and even cheerfully, awaiting the approach of his enemies, and forbidding all resistance, he fell beneath their blows—a martyr to the faith which he had so long lived, and so bravely died, to propagate. His copy of Ambrose, "*De Bono Mortis*," covered with his blood, was exhibited during many succeeding centuries, at

Fulda as a relic. It was contemplated there by many who regarded as superstitious and heretical some of the tenets of Boniface. But no Christian, whatever might be his own peculiar creed, ever looked upon that blood-stained memorial of him without the profoundest veneration.

For, since the Apostolic Age, no greater benefactor of our race has arisen among men than the Monk of Nutsall, unless it be that other Monk of Wittemberg who, at the distance of seven centuries, appeared to reform and reconstruct the churches founded by the holy Benedictine. To Boniface the north and west of Germany, and Holland, still look back as their spiritual progenitor ; nor did any uninspired man ever add to the permanent dominion of the Gospel provinces of such extent and value.

If, in accomplishing that great work, Boniface relied more on human authority than is consistent with the practice, or, rather, with the theory of our Protestant churches, his still extant letters will show that he rebuked, with indignant energy, the vices of the great on whom he was dependent. In placing the crown of Childeric on the head of Pepin, he may have been guilty of some worldly compliance with the usurper. Yet it is not to be forgotten that the Pope himself had favoured the cause of the Mayor of the Palace, by his Delphic response, "*Melius esse illum vocari regem apud quem summa potestas consisteret.*"

The guides of our own missionary enterprises will, probably, accuse Boniface of undue promptitude in admitting within the pale any one who chose to submit himself to the mere outward form of baptism. His facility is indisputable ; but what Protestant will venture to condemn the measures which brought within the precincts of the Christian Church the native lands of Luther, of Grotius, and of Melancthon ?

On a single occasion we find him wearing a garb at least resembling that of an inquisitor. Within his spiritual jurisdiction came a Frenchman, working miracles, and selling as relics the cuttings of his own hair and the parings of his own nails. This worthy had an associate in one Vincent, a Scotchman, a sort of premature Knox—a teacher, it is said, of heresies, but certainly a stout opponent of all the laws and canons of the Church. Moved by Boniface, the secular arm lodged them both in close prison ; and, all things considered, one must doubt their claim to any better lodgings.

Peace be, however, to the faults of Boniface, whatever they may have been ! Among the heroes of active piety, the world has few greater to revere ; as the disciples of Benedict have assuredly none greater to boast.

They boast, however, in Lanfranc, another primate, to whose far-seeing wisdom in the government of mankind may not obscurely be traced much of the vital spirit of those venerable institutions which are still the glory of the Anglo-Saxon race in our own islands and in the North American continent. In his romance of "Harold," Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, solving with equal erudition and creative fancy, the great problem of his art (the problem how to produce the greatest amount of dramatic effect at the least expense of historical truth), has produced a living portrait of Lanfranc, the subtle Italian, who, armed with homilies for the devout, jests for the facetious, austerities for the superstitious, learning for the inquisitive, and obsequiousness for the great, renders the weakness and the strength of each in turn tributary to his own ambition; and ascends the throne of Canterbury, not merely by the aid of the meek old Abbot Herduin, but on the shoulders of the imperious William and the imperial Hildebrand. Our great master of historico-romantic portraiture would have destroyed the picturesque unity of his beautiful sketch, if, by advancing further, he had taught us (and who could have taught us so powerfully?) how vast is the debt of gratitude which England owes to her great primates, Lanfranc, Anselm, Langton, and Becket,—or rather to that benign Providence which raised them up in that barbarous age. Whatever may have been their personal motives, and whatever their demerits, they, and they alone, wrestled successfully with the despotism of the Conqueror and his descendants to the fourth generation; maintaining among us, even in those evil days, the balanced power, the control of public opinion, and the influence of moral over physical, a force which from their times passed as a birthright to the parliaments of Henry III. and his successors; and which at this day remains the inheritance of England, and of all the free communities with which she has covered, and is still peopling, the globe. The thunders and reproaches of Rome are sufficiently encountered by such reverberated thunders and reproaches as they provoke. To those who deplore alike the necessity and the rancour of the conflict, it may yet be permitted to render a due and therefore a reverent homage to the ancient prelates of the Roman Church. Unchecked by the keen wisdom, the ecclesiastical policy, and the Roman sympathies of the Benedictine Lanfranc, the fierce Conqueror would have acquired and transmitted to his posterity on the English throne, a power absolute and arbitrary, beneath the withering influence of which every germ of the future liberties and greatness of England must have prematurely perished.

When, in the mind of William Rufus, the fear of death had pre-

vailed over the thirst for the revenues of Canterbury, he placed the mitre of Lanfranc on the head of the Benedictine Anselm; anticipating, probably, a less effective assertion of the rights of the Church by the retired and gentle student, than had been made by his insinuating and worldly-wise predecessor. In the great controversy of investitures, however, Anselm showed that nothing is so inflexible as meekness, sustained and animated by the firm conviction of right. Yet at the very moment of success he turned aside from these agitations to revolve the mysterious enigmas which it was at once the purpose and the delight of his existence to unravel. Those boundless realms of thought over which, in the solitude of his library, he enjoyed a princely, but unenvied dominion, were in his eyes of incomparably higher value than either his primacy of the Church of England, or his triumph in maintaining the prerogatives of the Church of Rome. In our days, indeed, his speculations are forgotten; and the very subjects of them have fallen into disesteem. Yet, except, perhaps, the writings of Eri-gena, those of Anselm on the "Will of God," on "Truth," on "Free-will," and on the "Divine Prescience," are not only, in point of time, the earliest examples, but, in the order of invention, the earliest models, of those scholastic works, which exhibit, in such intimate and curious union, the prostration and the aspirings of the mind of man—prostrating itself to the most absurd of human dogmas—aspiring to penetrate the loftiest and the most obscure of the Divine attributes.

Truth may have concealed herself from most of these inquirers; but their researches formed no unimportant part of the education which was gradually preparing the intellect of Europe for admission into her sanctuary. Among the followers of Anselm are to be reckoned not merely the Doctors—Venerable, Invincible, Irrefragable, Angelical, and Seraphic,—but a far greater than they, even Des Cartes himself—who, as may be learnt from Brucker, borrowed from the Benedictine philosopher his proof of the Being of a God. Anselm taught that the abstract idea of Deity was the fountal principle of all knowledge—that as God himself is the primæval source of all existence in the outer world, so the Idea of God precedes, and conducts us to, all other ideas in the world within us—and that, until we have risen to that remotest spring of all our thoughts, we cannot conceive rightly of the correspondence of our own perceptions with the realities amidst which we exist.

If these speculations are not very intelligible, they are at least curious. They show that the metaphysicians who lived when

Westminster Hall was rising from its foundations, and those who lived when the first stone of our Edinburgh University was laid, beat themselves very much in the same manner against the bars of their mental prison-house.

Philosophy may thrive in other places than conventual cells. But there is a literature which scarcely flourishes elsewhere. The peculiar and spontaneous product of the monastery is mystic devotion. If the Benedictines had been cursed with barrenness in yielding this fruit, they would have resembled a Dutch garden in which it was impossible to cultivate the tulip. But no such reproach clings to the sons and daughters of Benedict. It must, however, be admitted that our own land has been singularly destitute of fertility in this the most delicate of all the plants cultivated in monastic seclusion. We produced schoolmen to satiety. Erigena, Hales, Duns Scotus, and Occam were our own. But we must pass over to Spain and Germany to find a type of Benedictine greatness, in that impalpable though gorgeous world, which in later times was inhabited by Molinos and by Fénelon.

In those more fortunate regions, many are the half-inspired rhapsodists whom we encounter—chiefly ladies—and, what is worthy of notice, ladies who from their childhood had scarcely ever strayed beyond the convent garden. Nevertheless, the indestructible peculiarity of our national character (whether it be shyness or dryness,—high aims or low aims,—the fear of irreverence for what is holy, or the fear of being laughed at for what is absurd),—that character which forbade the public utterance in these islands of the impassioned communings of the soul with its Maker and with itself, forbids us to make any report to our fellow-countrymen of the sublime “Canticles” of St Gertrude or of St Theresa. Lest, however, our hasty sketch of Benedictine intellectual greatness should be defective, without some specimen of their super-terrestrial poetry, we venture to remind our readers of one passage of which M. de Malan (one of Mabillon’s biographers) has reminded us, in which the author of the “*De Imitatione Christi*” (himself a Benedictine, if Mabillon may be trusted) has sung to his *Æolian* harp a more than earthly strain. It is, indeed, an excellent example of a style of which we have no model in our own language,—except perhaps in occasional passages of Archbishop Leighton.

“My son, let not the sayings of men move thee, however beautiful or ingenious they may be: for the kingdom of God consisteth not in words but in power.

“Weigh well my words, for they kindle the heart, illuminate the

mind, quicken compunction, and supply abundant springs of consolation.

"Read not the Word of God in order that thou mayest appear more learned or more wise.

"When thou shalt have read and known many things, then return to the one beginning and principle of all things.

"I am he that teacheth man knowledge, and to little children I impart an understanding more clear than man can teach.

"He to whom I speak shall quickly be wise, and in spirit shall profit largely.

"Woe be to them that search out many curious things, and take little thought how they may serve me.

"I am he who, in one instant, raise up the humble in mind to understand eternal truth better than if he had studied many years in the schools.

"I teach without noise of words, without confusion of opinions, without ambition of honour, without the shock of arguments.

"To some men I speak common things, to others things rare ; to some I appear sweetly by signs ; to some, with much light, I discover mysteries.

"The voice of books is, indeed, one ; but it is a voice which instructs not all alike. I am he who teaches the truth concealed within the voice. I am the searcher of the heart, the discoverer of the thoughts, promoting holy actions, distributing to each one as I will."

If, as the Benedictines maintained, this sacred chant was really sung by a poet of their own fraternity about the beginning of the fourteenth century, it may be looked upon as a kind of threnody, designed to intimate the approaching obscuration of their Order. For already might be observed, in a state of morbid activity among them, those principles of decay which were pointed out so indigantly by Benedict himself to Dante, when, under the guidance of Beatrice, the poet had ascended to his presence in the seventh heaven :—

" * * My rule
Is left a profitless stain upon the leaves ;
The walls, for abbeys reared, turned into dens ;
The cows, to sacks choked up with musty meal.
Foul usury doth not more lift itself
Against God's pleasure, than that fruit which makes
The hearts of monks so wanton."

Carey's Dante, canto xxii. "Il Paradiso."

In the lapse of more than seven centuries, the state of society had

undergone vast changes; but the institutes of Benedict had not been changed to meet them. The new exigencies of life demanded reformations in the religious state which Francis, Dominic, and Loyola successively established. They combined a more mature policy with a younger enthusiasm. Exhibiting ascetic self-mortifications, till then unknown among any of the monastic communities of the West, they also formed relations, equally new, with the laity in all their offices—domestic, political, military, and commercial. Having, at the same time, obtained possession of nearly all the pulpits of the Latin Church, the imagination, the interests, and the consciences of mankind fell so much under the control of these new fraternities, that their influence was felt throughout all the ramifications of society.

While the spiritual dominion of the earlier monasticism was continually narrowed by this formidable competition, the Benedictines were no less constantly becoming more and more entangled in the cares and enjoyments of the world. They established an ill-omened alliance with the Templars, with the Knights of Calatrava and Alcántara, and with five other orders of chivalry—an unhallowed companionship, which, by familiarising the monks with the military and dissolute manners of these new brethren, gradually contaminated their own.

Wealth and temporal prosperity were no less prolific of evil in the Order of St Benedict than in other societies in which their enervating influence has been felt. But on the monks they inflicted a peculiar disaster. For their riches tempted the chief sovereigns of Europe to usurp the patronage of the religious houses; and to transfer the government of them from abbots elected by the chapters, to abbots appointed by the king.

The grant of these conventual benefices *in commendam*, was one of those abuses in the Church, which yielded to no reform until the Church herself and her abuses were swept away together, by the torrent of the French Revolution. It was, however, a practice in favour of which the most venerable antiquity might be alleged. From the earliest times churches had been placed under a kind of tutelage between the death of the incumbent and the appointment of his successor. But it not rarely happened that when the period of this spiritual guardianship was over, the tutor had become too much enamoured of his ward, and possessed too much influence with the great, to acquiesce in a separation from her. In such cases, the commendatory, aided by some ill-fed stipendiary curate, assumed all the privileges and immunities of a sinecurist.

Yet it was not necessary to rely on any vulgar names in defence

or in extenuation of this usage. The great Athanasius himself held a bishopric *in commendam*, in addition to his see of Alexandria. Neither were they vulgar names by whom it was condemned. Hildebrand, Innocent III., and the Fathers of Trent, rivalled each other in denunciations of the abuse; and were cordially seconded by Philippe Auguste, by St Louis, and even by Francis I. Papal, synodal, and royal decrees proved, however, too feeble to check an abuse so tempting to royal and sacerdotal cupidity. The French kings converted the splendid monastery of Fontevrault into an appanage for a long succession of royal or noble ladies. The abbey of St Germain-des-Prés also was given *in commendam* by Louis the Debonnaire, to a bishop of Poitiers; by Eudes to his brother Robert, a layman; and at length, by Louis XIII., to a widow of the Duke of Lorraine—which is much as though the mastership of Trinity College, Cambridge, had been given to the widow of the Elector Palatine.

During the progress of this decay, there was no lack of reformers, or of reforms of the Benedictine Order. But the corrupting proved too strong for the renovating power; and their decline proceeded without any real check until, in the year 1614, Don Nicholas Benard became a member of the congregation of St Maur.

Benard was one of those reformers to whom it is given to innovate, at once in the spirit of the institution which they desire to improve, and in the spirit of the age in which the improvement is to be made. His object was to bring back his Order to the dutifulness, the industry, and the self-renunciation enjoined by Benedict. His remedial process consisted in conducting them, by exhortation and by his own example, to the culture of those studies which were held in highest esteem in France in the reigns of the thirteenth and of the fourteenth Louis. In those times no seeds of science or literature could be sown in that favoured land without yielding an abundant increase. The reason of this redundant fertility at that particular era, no historian can explain and no psychologist can conjecture. But, like the other promoters of learning in his age, Benard soon found himself followed and surrounded by a band of scholars, who joined with him in the successful culture of all historical, antiquarian, and critical knowledge. With their aid he restored one of the chief households of the great Benedictine race to even more than their pristine glory.

During the seventeenth century one hundred and five writers in the congregation of St Maur (then established at St German-des-Prés) divided among them this harvest of literary renown. A complete collection of their works would form a large and very valuable

library ; as may indeed be inferred from a bare enumeration of the books of the earlier and later Fathers, which they republished. Among them are the best editions which the world has seen of the writings of St Gregory the Great, of Lanfranc, Basil, Bernard, Anselm, Augustine, Cassiodorus, Ambrose, Hilary, Jerome, Athanasius, Gregory of Tours, Irenæus, Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Tertullian, Justin, and Origen ; to which must be added their edition of Josephus.

But it would be as easy to form an image of the Grecian camp from the catalogue of the ships, as to conceive aright of the Benedictines of St Maur from an enumeration of their publications and of the names of the authors of them. To exhibit some slight sketch of that great seminary as it existed in its days of splendour, it is necessary to confine our attention to the Achilles of their host—to him whom all the rest revered as their great example, and acknowledged by acclamation as their head.

The Life of Mabillon has been written by Ruinart, his affectionate pupil ; by Dom Filipe le Cerf, the historiographer of the congregation ; and more recently by M. Chavin de Malan. To the last of these biographers we are largely indebted for much valuable information. But a companion at once more instructive and provoking, or a guide less worthy of confidence, never offered himself at the outset of any literary journey. It is the pleasure of M. de Malan to qualify the speculative propensities of our own age by the blindest credulity of the middle ages. He is at the same moment a rhetorician and an antiquarian (as a dervish dances while he prays), and is never satisfied with investigating truth, unless he can also embellish and adorn it. Happily, however, we are not dependent on his guidance. All that is most interesting respecting Mabillon may be gathered from his own letters and his works. For to write was the very law of his existence ; and from youth to old age his pen unceasingly plied those happy tasks, of which the interest never fails, and the tranquillity can never be disturbed.

Jean Mabillon was born at the village of St Pierre Mont, in Champagne, on the 23rd of November, 1632. His mother did not long survive his birth ; but Ruinart congratulates himself on having seen Etienne, the father of Jean, at the age of 105, in the full enjoyment of all his mental and bodily powers. Jean himself was sent by his paternal uncle, the curé of a parish near Rheims, to a college in that city, which, on his return homewards from the Council of Trent, the celebrated Cardinal of Lorraine had founded there for the education of clergymen. The habits of the place well became its origin. Except while addressing their teachers, the pupils passed

in profound silence every hour of the day save that of noon ; when they amused themselves in a garden, where, as we read, it was their custom, many hundred times a day, to salute a conspicuous image of the Virgin, with assurances of their veneration and their love.

Whatever may have been the effects of this discipline on the characters of his fellow-students, it moulded the meek and quiet nature of Mabillon into the exact form which the authors of it regarded as the most perfect. He surrendered up his will to theirs ; and, yielding his whole soul to the divine offices of his college chapel, became so familiar with them, that when, after an absence of more than fifty years, Ruinart knelt beside him there, he heard the then aged man repeat, from memory, with unerring exactness, every prayer, every ceremonial, and every sacred melody in which he had been accustomed to offer up the devotions of his youth.

In the year 1653, and (to use the chronology of the cloister and of Oxford) on the feast of the Decollation of St John the Baptist, Mabillon was received as a Postulant at the Benedictine monastery then attached to the cathedral church of St Remy. In that sublime edifice his imagination had long before been entranced by the anticipated delights of a life of devotional retirement. It had been his single indulgence, while at college, to wander thither that he might listen to the choral strains as they rose, and floated, and died away through the recesses of those long-drawn aisles ; and there had he often proposed to himself the question, whether this world had anything to offer so peaceful and so pure as an habitual ministration at those hallowed altars, and an unbroken ascent of the heart heavenwards, on the wings of those unearthly psalmodes ?

To this inquiry his judgment, or his feelings, still returned the same answer ; and, at the end of his novitiate, he gladly pronounced those irrevocable vows which were to exclude him for ever from all delights less elevated than those of a devotional life. He had not, however, long to await the proof that the exclusive use of this ethereal dietary is unfriendly to the health both of these gross bodies of ours, and of the sluggish minds by which they are informed. The flesh revolted ; and, to subdue the rebellion, ascetic rigours were required. Then (alas for the bathos !) that base and unfortunate viscus, the stomach, racked his head with insufferable pains. Compelled at length to fly for relief to a Benedictine convent at Nogent, he there soothed his aching brows by traversing, and mourning over, the ruins which the impious ravages of the Huguenots had brought upon the monastic buildings. Then passing, for relief, to another monastery at Corbie, he recovered his health ; through the intercession of St Adelhard, the patron saint of the place, as he piously

believed ; though a less perfect faith might have been tempted to ascribe the cure to the active employments in the open air in which the abbot of Corbie compelled him to engage.

With restored health, Mabillon was next transferred, by the commands of his superior, to the royal abbey of St Denys ; there to act as curator of the treasures which the profaneness of a later age has scattered to the winds. This was no light trust. Amidst countless monuments of the illustrious dead, and of the greatness of the French monarchy, the collection contained one of the arms in which the aged Simeon had raised the infant Jesus in the Temple ; and the very hand which the sceptical Thomas had stretched out to touch the wounded side of his risen Lord !

It was just one year before the birth of Mabillon, that the congregation of St Maur had taken possession of the monastery of St Germain-des-Prés at Paris. At the time of his arrival at St Denys, Dom Luc d'Achery, a Benedictine monk, was engaged at St Germain's, in one of those gigantic undertakings to which Benard had invited his fraternity. It was a compilation from the libraries of France of the more rare and valuable letters, poems, charters, and chronicles relating to ecclesiastical affairs, which had been deposited in them either in later or remoter ages. These gleanings (for they were published under the name of *Spicilegium*) extended over thirteen quarto volumes. Such, however, were the bodily infirmities of the compiler, that during forty-five years he had never been able to quit the infirmary. There he soothed his occasional intermissions of pain and study, by weaving chaplets of flowers for the embellishment of the altars of the church of St Germain's.

For the relief of this venerable scholar, Mabillon, then in his thirty-fifth year, was withdrawn from his charge of St Denys to St Germain's, where he passed the whole of his remaining life in the execution of that series of works which have placed his name at the head of the competitors for the palm of erudition in the most erudite nation of the world, at the period of her greatest eminence in learning. The commencement of his fame was laid in a demeanour still more admirable for self-denial, humility, and loving-kindness. To mitigate the sufferings of D'Achery, and to advance his honour, had become the devoted purpose of his affectionate assistant. Taking his seat at the feet of the old man, Mabillon humoured his weakness, stole away his lassitude, and became at once his servant, his secretary, his friend, and his confessor. From the resources of his far deeper knowledge, guided by his much larger capacity, he enabled D'Achery to complete his *Spicilegium*,

—generously leaving him in possession of the undivided honour of that contribution to the literary wealth of France.

Nor was this the greatest of the self-sacrifices which he made to gratify the feelings of the aged antiquarian. Benard and the other brethren of the congregation had, from their first settlement at St Germain's, meditated a complete history of their Order. During forty successive years they had accumulated for the purpose a body of materials of such variety and magnitude as to extinguish the hopes and baffle the exertions of all ordinary men. Having found at length in Mabillon one fitted to "grapple with whole libraries," they committed to him the Titanic labour of hewing out of those rude masses an enduring monument to the glory of Benedict and of his spiritual progeny. He undertook the task in the spirit of obedience and of love. In the printed circular letters with which he solicited the aid of the learned, he joined the name of D'Achery to his own; and kept alive the same friendly fiction by uniting their names in the title-page of every volume of the *Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Sancti Benedicti* which appeared in D'Achery's lifetime.

The literary annals of France, although abounding in prodigies, record nothing more marvellous than the composition of that book by a single man, in the midst of other labours of almost equal magnitude. From the title alone it might be inferred that it was a mere collection of religious biographies; and, if such had been the fact, they who are the deepest read in Roman Catholic hagiology would probably prefer the perusal of the writers of ordinary romance; since, with less irreverence for sacred things, they are usually more entertaining, and not less authentic. For, in recording the lives of those whom it is the pleasure of the Church to honour, her zealous children regard every incident redounding to their glory, as resting on so firm and broad a basis of antecedent probability, as to supersede the necessity for any positive evidence at all;—nay, as to render impious the questioning of any such testimonies as may happen to be cited, even when they are the most suspicious and equivocal. This argument from probability is especially insisted on, when any such occurrences are alleged as miraculous—that is, as improbable—for, if probable, they cease to be miracles. Of these probable improbabilities, few writers are better persuaded, or more profuse, than Mabillon.

But apart from the extravagancies of his monkish legends, and in despite of them all, Mabillon's book will live in perpetual honour and remembrance as the great and inexhaustible reservoir of knowledge respecting the ecclesiastical, religious, and monastic history

of the middle ages ; and, therefore, though incidentally, respecting the secular condition and intellectual character of mankind during that period. In those nine folios lie, in orderly method and chronological arrangement, vast accumulations of authentic facts, of curious documents, and of learned disquisitions ; like some rich geological deposit, from which the Genius of history may hereafter raise up and irradiate the materials of a philosophical survey of the institutions, habits, and opinions which have been transmitted from those remote generations to our own. Thence also may be readily disinterred picturesque narratives without end ; and inexhaustible disclosures both of the strength and of the weakness of the human heart.

Nor will this knowledge be found in the state of rude and unorganised matter. Mabillon was not a mere compiler ; but was also a learned theologian, and a critic and scholar of the first order. When emancipated from the shackles of human authority, he knew how to take a wide survey of the affairs of men, and could sketch their progress from age to age with a free and powerful hand. To each volume which he lived to complete, he attached a prefatory survey of the epoch to which it referred ; and those *Prolegomena*, if republished in a detached form, would constitute such a review of the ecclesiastical history of that perplexing period, as no other writer has yet given to the world. It would, indeed, be based throughout upon assumptions which the Protestant Churches with one voice contradict. But if, for the immediate purpose, those assumptions were conceded, the reader of such a work would find himself in possession of all the great controversies which agitated the Christian world during several centuries ; and of the best solutions of which they are apparently susceptible. Nor is it an insignificant addition to their other merits, that the Latin in which these ponderous *Tomes* are written, if often such as Cicero would have rejected, is yet better adapted than the purest Ciceronian style, for the easy and unambiguous communication of thought in modern times—the phraseology and the grammar, those of the Court of Augustus ; the idioms and structure of the sentences, not seldom those of the Court of Louis Quatorze.

In the reign of that most orthodox Prince, to have given assent to any fact on which the Church had not set the seal of her infallibility was hazardous ; much more so to dissent from any fact which her authority had sanctioned. Yet even this heavy charge was preferred against Mabillon by some of his Benedictine brethren, before a general chapter of the Order. Among the saints of whom the fraternity boasted, there were some whose relation to the Order he had

disputed ; some whose claims to having lived and died in the odour of sanctity he had rejected ; some whose very existence he had denied. So at least we understand the accusation. His antagonists maintained that it was culpable, thus to sacrifice the edification of the faithful to a fastidious regard for historical evidence ; and injurious, thus to abandon a part of the glories of their society, which, by mere silence, might have been maintained inviolate. Among those who invoked the censure of their superiors on the reckless audacity of Mabillon's critical inquiries, the foremost was Dom Phillippe Bastide ; and to him Mabillon addressed a defence, in every line of which his meekness and his love of truth beautifully balance and sustain each other.

"I have ever been persuaded," he says, "that in claiming for their Order honours not justly due to it, monastic men offend against the modesty of the Gospel as grievously as any person who arrogates to himself individually a merit to which he is not really entitled. To pretend that this is allowable because the praise is desired, not for the monk himself, but for his Order, seems to me no better than a specious pretext for the disguise of vanity. Though disposed to many faults, I must declare that I have ever had an insuperable aversion to this ; and that therefore I have been scrupulous in inquiring who are the saints really belonging to my own Order. It is certain that some have been erroneously attributed to it, either from the almost universal desire of extolling, without bounds, the brotherhood of which we are members, or on account of some obscurity in the relations which have been already published. The most upright of our writers have made this acknowledgment ; nor have the Fathers Yebez and Menard hesitated to reduce the number of our saints by omitting those whom they thought inadmissible. I thought myself also entitled to make a reasonable use of this freedom ; though with all the caution which could be reconciled with reverence for truth. I commit the defence of my work to the Divine Providence. It was not of my own will that I engaged on it. My brethren did me the honour to assign the task to me ; and if they think it right, I shall cheerfully resign the completion of it to any one whose zeal may be at once more ardent and more enlightened than my own."

In the Benedictine conclave the cause of historical fidelity triumphed, though not without a long and painful discussion. In proof of the touching candour which Mabillon exhibited as a controversialist, we are told that he spontaneously published one of the many dissertations against his book, to manifest his esteem and affection for the author of it. But before subscribing to this

eulogium, one would wish to examine the arrow which he thus winged for a flight against his own bosom. Recluse as he was, he was a Frenchman still; and may have quietly enjoyed a little pleasantry even at the expense of a friend—for he was a man of a social spirit, and not altogether unskilled in those arts by which society is amused and animated.

The sick chamber of D'Achery was, however, the only *salon* in which he could exert these talents. There, for the gratification of his aged friend, and, doubtless, for his own, he was accustomed on certain evenings to entertain a circle of scholars devoted, like themselves, to antiquarian researches. The hotels of Paris in his days were thronged with more brilliant assemblies,—even as, in our own times, *réunions* of greater aristocratic dignity have adorned that Faubourg of St Germain in which these gatherings of the learned took place. But neither the Bourbon Lilies nor the Imperial Eagles ever protected a society more distinguished by the extent and depth of the knowledge they were able to interchange. In that ill-furnished dormitory of the decrepit monk, might be seen Du Cange, reposing for a moment from his scrutiny into all the languages and histories of mankind; and Baluze, rich in inexhaustible stores of feudal and ecclesiastical learning; and D'Herbelot, unrivalled in oriental literature; and Fleury, in whom the Church of Rome reveres the most perfect of her annalists; and Adrian de Valois, whose superlative skill in deciphering the remains of the first dynasties of France was so amusingly combined with almost equal skill in finding fault with his own generation, as to provoke an occasional smile even in the most thoughtful of those grave countenances; and, more eminent than all these, Fénélon, then basking in the noon of royal favour, and Bossuet, in the meridian of his genius, both of whom, if not habitual guests at the monastery, lived in an affectionate confidence with Mabillon, which they were unable to maintain with each other.

Nor were these the only relations which he had formed with the world beyond his convent walls. The Jesuits, the Bollandists of Antwerp, and the chroniclers of the Carthusian and Cistercian fraternities, solicited his aid in their various literary pursuits. Leibnitz applied to him for intelligence regarding the House of Brunswick; and even Madame de la Valliere sued for his interest to procure for one of her kindred advancement in that world from which she had herself retired to penitential solitude. Like other luminaries in the same literary firmament, he was now followed by his attendant satellites; nor was his orbit seldom disturbed by the too close vicinity of the bodies amidst which he was constrained to pass.

The theological, or rather the conventual, world was at that time agitated by a controversy, in which the great eulogist of the Benedictine Saints could not have declined to interfere without some loss of honour, and some abandonment of the cause of which he had become the illustrious advocate. It related to the authorship of the treatise "*De Imitatione Christi*,"—of all uninspired writings incomparably the most popular, if the popularity of books may be inferred from the continuance and extent of their circulation. That it was written either in the fourteenth, or at the commencement of the fifteenth, century, was a well-ascertained fact; and that the author was a monk might be confidently inferred from internal evidence. But was he Thomas à Kempis, one of the regular canons of Mont St Agnes, near Zwol? or was he the Benedictine Jean Gersen? This was the point at issue; and with what learning, zeal, and perseverance it was debated, is well known to all the curious in such matters; and may be learned by others from the notice prefixed by Thuilliers to his edition of the posthumous works of Mabillon. It is only so far as his pen was diverted from its Cyclopean toils by this protracted warfare, that we are concerned with it at present.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, a Flemish printer, then living at Paris (Joducus Badius Ascentius was his Latinised name), published two editions of the "*De Imitatione*," in which Thomas, of the village of Kemp, in the diocese of Cologne, was, for the first time, announced as the author. Francis de Tol, or Tob, a German, in two other editions, followed this example; and was himself followed by Sommatius, a Jesuit,—in reliance, as he said, on certain manuscripts of the work in the handwriting of Thomas à Kempis, then to be seen at Antwerp and Louvain.

But in the year 1616, Constantine Cajitano, a Benedictine monk, published at Rome another edition, in the title-page of which Gersen was declared to be the author; partly on the authority of a manuscript at the Jesuits' College at Arona, and partly in deference to the judgment of Cardinal Bellarmine.

Round Cajitano rallied all the champions of the Gersenian cause. The partisans of Thomas à Kempis found an equally zealous leader in the person of Rosweid, a Jesuit. Bellarmine, himself a member of the same company, was, as the Kempists maintained, induced by Rosweid to abandon the Gersenian standard. The Benedictines, on the contrary, assert that the Cardinal never deserted it at all, nor ever gave in his adhesion to their adversaries except by pronouncing the words, "*As you will*," in order to silence the importunities with which the anxious Kempists were disturbing his dying bed.

Whatever the fact may be regarding Bellarmine's latest opinion, the next chieftain who appears on this battle-field is Francis Waldegrave; who, with true English pertinacity and party spirit, traversed the Continent, to bring up to Cajitano a vast reinforcement of manuscripts, pictures, and other proofs collected from all the German, Swiss, and Italian abbeys. Missiles from either side darkened the air; when, between the combatants, appeared the majestic form of Richelieu himself, who, having employed the royal press at the Louvre to print off a new edition of the "*De Imitatione*," enjoyed at once the honour of being solicited by the disputants on either side for his authoritative suffrage, and the pleasure of disappointing both, by maintaining to the last a dignified neutrality.

On the death of Rosweid, the commander of the Kempists, his bâton passed to Fronteau, a regular canon, who signalised his accession to the command by a work called "*Thomas Vindicatus*." This, for the first time, drew into the field the congregation of St Maur, who, by their champion Dom Quatremaire, threw down the gauntlet in the form of a pamphlet entitled "*Gersen Assertus*." It was taken up by the Jesuit, George Hesel, the author of what he called "*Dioptra Kempensis*." That blow was parried by Quatremaire, in a publication to which he gave the title of "*Gersen iterum Assertus*." And then the literary combatants were both surprised and alarmed to learn that the Prevot of Paris considered their feud as dangerous to the peace of that most excitable of cities; and that they could no longer be permitted to shed ink with impunity in the cause of either claimant.

Thus the controversy was transferred to the safe arbitrament of Harlay, the archbishop of that see; who, having no other qualification for the task than the dignity he derived from his mitre, convened at his palace a solemn council of the learned, which, under his own presidency, was to investigate the pretensions of Thomas and of Gersen. Of this conclave Mabillon was a member; and, after much deliberation, they pronounced a sentence which affirmed the title of Gersen to the honour of having written this ever-memorable treatise.

An ultimate appeal to public opinion lies against all adjudications, let who will be the author of them; and in due season the Father Testelette made that appeal against the decision of the archiepiscopal palace, in the form of a book entitled "*Vindiciæ Kempenses*," which drew from Mabillon his "*Animadversiones*" on the argument of Testelette. A truce of ten years followed; after which another council was held, under the presidency of Du Cange; and although

they pronounced no formal sentence, yet the general inclination and tendency of their opinions appears to have been hostile to the claims of Gersen,—which have ever since been regarded by the best judges with suspicion, if not with disfavour.

Agitated by this vehement dispute, and mourning the silence of her infallible head, the Roman Catholic Church was at length rejoiced to repose in the oracular dictum of St Francis de Sales, who declared that the authorship was to be ascribed neither to Thomas à Kempis nor to Gersen, but to him by whose inspiration the Scriptures themselves had been written !

It is probably on account of the darkness of the regions through which they pass, that antiquarians, philologists, and theologians are so much addicted to use their pens as belligerent weapons. Though the most peaceful of mankind, Mabillon, while waging war with the Kempists on one flank, was engaged in a contest not less arduous with the Bollandists on the other. Papebroch, one of the most learned of that learned body, had published a book on the art of verifying the charters and other ancient public acts deposited in the various archives of Europe. In 1681 Mabillon answered him in a treatise "*De Re Diplomaticâ*." After laying down rules for distinguishing the false instruments from the true,—rules derived from the form of the character, the colour of the ink, the nature of the penmanship, the style and orthography of the instrument, the dates, seals, and subscriptions,—he proceeded to show, by more than 200 examples, how his laws might be applied as a test ; and how, by the application of that test, the manuscripts on which Papebroch chiefly relied might be shown to be valueless. Whatever may be thought of the interest of this dispute (which, however, involves questions of the very highest practical importance), no one probably will read with indifference the answer of Papebroch to his formidable antagonist :—

"I assure you," he says, "that the only satisfaction which I retain in having written at all on this subject is, that it has induced you to write so consummate a work. I confess that I felt some pain when I first read it, at finding myself refuted in a manner so conclusive. But the utility and the beauty of your treatise have at length got the better of my weakness ; and in the joy of contemplating the truth exhibited in a light so transparent, I called on my fellow-student here to partake of my own admiration. You need have no difficulty, therefore, in stating publicly, whenever it may fall in your way, that I entirely adopt and concur in your opinions."

While Papebroch, thus gracefully lowering his lance, retired from the lists, they were entered by Father Germon, another Jesuit ; who,

armed with two duodecimo volumes, undertook to subvert the new Benedictine science. His main assault was aimed at the assumption pervading Mabillon's book, that the authenticity and the authority of an ancient charter were the same. He suggested that forgery was a very wide-spread art, and had probably flourished with peculiar vigour in remote and ignorant ages. Mabillon was content to reply that throughout his extensive researches, he had never found a proof of any such imposture. His disciples assailed the sceptical German by far more elaborate hostilities. In one form or another the dispute has descended to our own times. At the commencement of it, in the seventeenth century, in France, it yielded (as what French dispute will not yield?) some choice entertainment. The Jesuit, Hardouin, anticipating our contemporary, Strauss, resolved all these ancient instruments, and with them a large part of the remains of antiquity, into so many monkish and mythical inventions. Thus, he declared that the odes of Horace were written in some Benedictine monastery; and that Lalage herself was nothing more than a monkish poetical symbol of the Christian faith. Whither such theories tended Hardouin clearly enough perceived; but he sheltered himself by offering up his thanks to God that he had been denied all human faith, in order (as he said) that the total want of it might improve and strengthen his divine faith. Boileau's remark on the occasion was still better: "I have no great fancy for monks," he said, "yet I should be glad to have known Brother Horace and Dom Virgil."

Father Anacreon might have been recognised by the great satirist in the person of the reverend Armand Jean le Bouthillier de Rancé, who, having been appointed, at the age of ten, to a canonry at Notre Dame, became, in less than three years afterwards, the author of a new edition of the Anacreontic Odes,—a work of undoubted merit in its way; though it must not be concealed that the young canon was happy in the possession of a learned tutor, as well as of powerful patrons; for Richelieu was his godfather and kinsman, Bossuet his friend, Marie de Medicis his protector, Francis de Harlay (afterwards archbishop of Paris) the associate of his youthful revels, and De Retz his instructor in intrigue and politics. Eminent alike in the field and at the Sorbonne, De Rancé would occasionally throw aside his hunting frock for his cassock,—saying to Harlay, "*Je vais ce matin prêcher comme un ange, ce soir chasser comme un diable.*" The pupil of the coadjutor was, of course, however, an eyesore and an offence to Mazarin; and being banished by him to Verret, this venerable archdeacon and doctor in divinity (such were then his dignities) converted his château there into so luxurious a retreat,

that the cardinal himself might have looked with envy on the exile.

The spirit of this extraordinary churchman was, however, destined to undergo a change, immediate, final, and complete. De la Roque relates that having hurried to an interview with a lady of whom he was enamoured, he found her stretched in her shroud—a disfigured corpse. Marsollier's story is that his life was saved by the rebound of a musket-ball from a pouch attached to his shooting belt. It is agreed on all sides that, under the deep emotion excited by some such startling occurrence, he retired from the world, and became first the founder, and then the Abbé of the monastery of La Trappe, of the Cistercian Order, where he remained till his death. During the forty intervening years he was engaged in solving the problem—what are the Maxima of self-inflicted mortifications which, in the transit through this world to the next, it is possible to combine with the Minima of innocent self-gratifications?

While occupied in this rueful inquiry, it happened that De Rancé lighted on a treatise which Mabillon had recently published under the title of “*Traité des Etudes monastiques*.” To M. de la Trappe, it appeared that the book was designed as an indirect attack on himself and his community; and he made his appeal to the world he had abandoned, in a publication, entitled “*Réponse au Traité des Etudes monastiques*.” In reluctant obedience to the commands of his spiritual superiors, Mabillon published “*Réflexions sur la Réponse de M. l'Abbé de la Trappe*,” which drew from De Rancé another volume, entitled “*Eclaircissements sur la Réponse*,” &c.; and there the controversy ended.

When one of two disputants plants his foot on the terra firma of intelligible utility, and the other is upborne by the shifting, dark, and shapeless clouds of mysticism, it is impossible for any witness of the conflict to trace distinctly either the progress or the result of it. It may, however, be in general reported of this debate that, according to the Benedictine arguments, he best employs the leisure of a religious state who most successfully devotes it to the diffusion among mankind of divine and human knowledge: while, according to the Trappist, such labours are at best but the fulfilment of the written, positive, and categorical commands of Scripture or of the Church,—an obedience of incomparably less excellency than that which is due from those communities, or from those individuals, who are called to the state of sinless perfection; for to them it is given, not merely or chiefly to conform to absolute rules of duty, but to listen to those inarticulate suggestions which, from the sanctuary of the Divine presence, descend into the sanctuary of the human

heart, and to dwell amidst those elevations of soul to which such heaven-born impulses are designed to conduct them.

They who thus contended could never come within the reach of each other's weapons. But Mabillon and De Rancé could never get beyond the reach of each other's love. After the close of the debate they met at La Trappe; and separated—not without much unre-served and affectionate intercourse,—each in possession of his own opinion, and of his antagonist's esteem. The sentences of Innocent XII. and Clement XI. awarded the victory to the author of "*Les Etudes monastiques*;" and, without the gift of infallibility, the same result might, with safety, have been predicted from the different tempers in which the controversialists had encountered each other. Mabillon descended to the contest in the panoply of a humble, truth-loving spirit. De Rancé (if we may rely on those who knew him well) was not emancipated, even in his retreat, from that enervating thirst for human sympathy which had distinguished him in the world. His disputations and his self-tormentings are both supposed to have been deeply tinged by his constitutional vanity; and it was believed that he would have been far less assiduous in digging his grave and macerating his flesh, if the pilgrimage to La Trappe had not become a rage at Paris; and if the *salons* of that most inquisitive capital had not been so curious for descriptions of that living sepulchre, that the very votaries of pleasure were sometimes irretrievably drawn, by a kind of suicidal fascination, within those gates impervious to all sublunary delights, and scarcely visited by the light of day.

From the depths of his humility Mabillon gathered not only truth, but courage. In his days the altars of the Church were everywhere hallowed by the relics of saints and martyrs; of which the catacombs at Rome afforded an inexhaustible supply. To watch over this precious deposit, and to discriminate the spurious article from the true, was the peculiar office of a congregation selected for that purpose from the sacred college. But though the skill and the integrity of cardinals were remote from all suspicion, who could answer for the good faith of their subordinate agents, and what was the security that the *Dulia* appropriate to the bones of the blessed might not be actually rendered to the skeletons of the ungodly?

When teaching the art of discriminating between the osseous remains of different mammalia, Cuvier never displayed a more edifying seriousness than was exhibited by Mabillon in laying down the laws which determine whether any given bone belonged of yore to a sinner or a saint. The miracle-working criterion, though apparently the best of all, being rejected silently, and not without very good

reasons, Eusebius Romanus (such was his incognito on this occasion) addressed to Theophilus Gallus a letter "De Cultu Sanctorum ignotorum;" in which he discussed the sufficiency of three other tests. First, he inquired, are we sure of the sanctity of a bone extracted from a sepulchre on which an anagram of the name of Christ is sculptured in the midst of palms and laurels? The answer is discouraging: because it is a well-ascertained fact that the body of one Flavia Jovina was found in this precise predicament, and yet she was a simple neophyte. Then, secondly, are we safe if a vase stained with blood be also found in the tomb? Nothing more secure—if only we could be quite certain that the stain was sanguineous, and was not produced by the perfumes which the ancients were accustomed to heap up in such vessels. But, thirdly, what if the word "Martyr" be engraven on the stone? In that case all doubt would be at an end, were it not for a sophistical doctrine of *equivalents* which the relic dealers have propagated. Thus, for example, at the abbey of St Martin, at Pontoise, the devout had long been honouring the corpse of one Ursinus, in the quiet belief that the words of his sepulchral inscription were *equivalent* to a declaration of martyrdom, whereas, on inquiry, it turned out that they were really as follows: "Here lies Ursinus, who died on the first of June, after living with his wife Leontia 20 years and 6 months, and in the world 49 years, 4 months, and 3 days." Thus his only recorded martyrdom was the endurance of Leontia's conjugal society for twenty years and upwards.

Abandoning then all these guides, whither are we to look for assurance as to the title of a relic to the veneration of the faithful? To this grave inquiry the learned Benedictine gravely answers as follows: Be sure that the alleged saint has been authentically proved to have been a saint. Be sure that his sanctity was established, not merely by baptism, but by some illustrious deeds, attested either by tradition or by certain proofs. Above all, be sure that the apostolic see has ordained that homage be rendered to his remains. Admirable canons, doubtless. Yet to an unenlightened Protestant it would seem that they afford no solution of the problem—Did this very jawbone before which we are kneeling, sustain, while yet in life and action, the teeth of a martyr, or the teeth of one of those by whom martyrs were slain, or the teeth of any one else?

To assert that any such question was debatable at all before the tribunal of human reason, was, however, an overt act of liberalism; which Mabillon was of course required to expiate. Long and anxious were the debates in the congregation of the Index, whether the book should not be condemned, and the temerity of the author

rebuked ; nor would that censure have been averted but for the interference of the Pope in person ; who made himself sponsor for the willingness of Eusebius to explain in a new edition whatever might be thought objectionable in the first. The pledge was redeemed accordingly ; and then the letter "*De Cultu Sanctorum ignotorum*" was not only acquitted of reproach by that sacred College, but even honoured with their emphatic approbation.

Mabillon gave a yet more decisive proof that he was not blinded to truth by any extravagant scepticism. In his days, as in our own, there was living a M. Thiers, a man of singular talents, and of no less remarkable courage ; who had accused the Benedictine fathers of Vendôme of an egregious imposture, in exhibiting at their convent one of those tears which fell from the eyes of Jesus when he wept at the grave of Lazarus. An angel (such was the legend) had treasured it up, and given it to Mary, the sister of the deceased. It passed some centuries afterwards to the treasury of relics at Constantinople ; and was bestowed by *some* Greek emperor upon *some* German mercenaries in reward for *some* services to his crown. They placed it in the abbey of Frisingen, whence it was conveyed by the Emperor Henry III., who transferred it to his mother-in-law, Agnes of Anjou, the foundress of the monastery of Vendôme, where she deposited it. Mabillon threw the shield of his boundless learning round this tradition ; maintaining that the genuineness of the relic might at least be reasonably presumed from the admitted facts of the case ; that it had a prescriptive claim to the honours it received ; and that his brethren ought to be left in peaceable enjoyment of the advantages they derived from the exhibition in their church at Vendôme of the Holy Tear of Bethany.

Passing from fables too puerile for the nursery, to inquiries which have hitherto perplexed the senate, Mabillon undertook to explain the right principles of Prison Discipline, in a work entitled "*Réflexions sur les Prisons des Ordres Religieux.*" He insisted, that by a judicious alternation and mixture of solitude, labour, silence, and devotion, it was practicable to render the gaol a school for the improvement of its unhappy inmates in social arts and in moral character. After discussing to what extent solitary confinement would be consistent with the mental and bodily health of the sufferers, and how far the rigour of punishment ought to be mitigated by exercise and active employments, he concludes as follows :—

"To return to the prison of St Jean Climaque. A similar place might be established for the reception of penitents. There should be in such a place several cells like those of the Chartreux, with a workshop, in which the prisoners might be employed at some useful

work. To each cell also might be attached a little garden, to be thrown open to the prisoner at certain hours, for the benefit of labour, and exercise in the open air. They should attend public worship, at first in a separate lodge or compartment, and afterwards in the choir with the congregation at large, so soon as they should have passed the earlier stages of penal discipline, and given proofs of penitence. Their diet should be coarse and poor, and their fasts frequent. They should receive frequent exhortation, and the master of the gaol, either in person or by deputy, should from time to time see them in private, at once to console and to strengthen them. Strangers should not be permitted to enter the place, from which all external society should be strictly excluded. Once establish this, and so far from such a retirement appearing horrible and insupportable, I am convinced that the greater number of the prisoners would scarcely regret their confinement, even if it were for life. I am aware that all this will be considered as a vision of some new Atlantis : but let the world say or think what it may, it would be easy to render prisons more tolerable and more useful, if men were but disposed to make the attempt."

So wrote a Benedictine monk in the age and kingdom of Louis XIV. The honour which one of his biographers, M. de Malan, challenges for him, of being the very earliest of those who have addressed themselves to this difficult subject in the spirit of philanthropy and wisdom, is strictly his due. To the enlightened reformer of prisons may be cheerfully forgiven his sacred osteology, and even his defence of the Holy Tear of Vendôme. Though in bondage to the prejudices of his own age, he was able to break through the bonds which have shackled so many powerful minds in later and more enlightened times.

In the midst of these and similar employments, Mabillon had reached his sixty-second year, but the great project of his life was still unfinished and unattempted. In the belief that the end of his days was drawing near, he desired to consecrate them to a devout preparation for death. But being roused to the task by the instances of Renaudot and Baluze, and his affectionate pupil Ruinart, he engaged, with all the ardour of youth, in collecting materials for his long-meditated history of the Benedictine Order. In studying and methodising the vast collections at his disposal, the aged scholar displayed, though without a shade of scepticism, an acuteness which the subtlest sceptic might have envied, and, without a tinge of philosophy, a luminousness of mind worthy of the most illustrious philosopher.

At that period the more ardent sons of the Church regarded her

as no less infallible when she asserted historical facts, than when she proclaimed dogmatic truths. On the other hand, the Centuriators of Magdeburgh, Du Pin, Richard Simon, and even the great Arnauld, had presumed to interrogate ecclesiastical traditions, and to controvert the authority of popes and synods, fathers and saints, whenever it touched on topics beyond the articles of the Christian faith. This audacious freedom was rebuked by the contemptuous and withering eloquence of Bossuet; and Mabillon presented himself as the great living model of an historian, employing the most profound and varied knowledge, under the severe restraints of this intellectual docility. By day and by night he laboured, during the last fourteen years of his life, on the annals of his Order; without so much as a solitary departure from the implicit submission which he yielded to the Church, as to all matters of fact attested either by her own authoritative voice, or by the decision of her accredited doctors. The result was, that, instead of a history of what had actually occurred, he produced a chronicle, from which it may be learnt what are the occurrences, the belief of which the Church has sanctioned, or has silently left to the investigation of her obedient annalists.

It is, however, a book which irresistible evidence establishes, and which, without such evidence, could not be believed to be the work of a single man between his sixty-second and seventy-sixth years. It comprises a biography of the Benedictine saints in a form more compendious than that of his *Acta Sanctorum*. It contains an account of every other illustrious member of the Order. It includes a careful review of every book written by any eminent Benedictine author. All the grants and charters under which the property and privileges of their monasteries were held, are recapitulated and abridged in it. Finally, it embraces a description of all their sepulchral and other ancient monuments.

Five folio volumes of this vast compilation were finished, and the last was about to appear, when the life and labours of Mabillon were brought to a painful and a sudden, though not an immature termination. Ruinart meditated, though in vain, the completion of the work. He lifted (perhaps unwisely) the veil which would otherwise have concealed the last fearful agonies of its great author. He has, however, shown, with the most artless and genuine pathos, how the tortures of the body were soothed and dignified by the faith, the hope, and the serenity of soul of the sufferer. With no domestic ties, and no worldly ambition to bind him to earth, and with no anxious forebodings to overcast the prospect before him, he entertained the last enemy as a messenger of good tidings, and a herald of ap-

proaching joy and freedom; and then breathed out his spirit in an unhesitating affiance on Him, whom, beneath the shade of many superstitions, and the burden of many errors, he had loved, and trusted, and obeyed from childhood to the grave.

Mabillon was a perfect model of monastic perfection; and however much inferior the produce of the conservatory may be to those hardier plants which germinate amidst the frosts and the scorchings of the unsheltered day, yet they have a value and a delicacy peculiarly their own. He had quitted the world without a sigh, and probably never breathed a sigh to return to it. If compelled to revisit and to tread the highways of mankind, he would have resembled the life-long prisoner of an aviary, driven out to the bleak uplands for shelter. Meekly bowing his head to "Holy Obedience," he yielded himself without reluctance, to be moulded into whatever form that Genius of the place might prescribe. Nor was this a painful sacrifice. The graces of the cloister—docility, devotion, and self-discipline—were his by an antenatal predestination. Mabillon lived and died in an uninterrupted subjection to positive laws and forms of man's devising. Even in his interior life, rule and habit exercised an inflexible dominion over him. He worshipped indeed with fervent piety; but with such a mechanical exactness of ceremonial, of time, and of place, as might seem, to a careless self-observer, fatal to the life of spiritual exercises. To his daily routine of divine offices were added other forms of private worship, scarcely less immutable; of which some were appropriate to his entrance on any literary work,—some to the arrival of the first proof-sheet from the press,—and some to the commencement of the studies of each succeeding day.

To this constitutional and acquired acquiescence in the will of his superiors and the rules of his convent, was added the most profound lowliness of spirit. "Permit me, Sire," said Le Tellier, the archbishop of Rheims, to Louis XIV., "to present to your Majesty Dom Mabillon, the most learned man in your Majesty's dominions." "Sire," rejoined Bossuet, who stood by, "the archbishop might also have said the most humble man in France." It is supposed that the plumage of the eagle of Meaux was not a little ruffled by the superlative adjective which derogated from his own claims to the first place among men of learning. But the applauses both of the archbishop and of the bishop, in whatever temper given, were perfectly just. The proofs of Mabillon's learning are, at this moment, amongst the noblest monuments of the age of Louis XIV. The proofs which his eulogists adduce of his humility have not been very judiciously selected.

A humble man is one who, thinking of himself neither more highly nor more lowly than he ought to think, passes a true judgment on his own character. But the great Benedictine neither entertained nor suggested a truth; when among titled men, and learned men, and superficial pretenders to knowledge, he bore himself as if he had been undeserving of their notice, and unworthy to communicate with them on equal terms. There is no genuine self-abasement apart from a lofty conception of our own destiny, powers, and responsibilities; and one of the most excellent of human virtues is but poorly expressed by an abject carriage. Torpid passions, a languid temperament, and a feeble nature, may easily produce that false imitation of humility; which, however, in its genuine state, will ever impart elevation to the soul and dignity to the demeanour. This part of Mabillon's portrait has been ill drawn; because the artists drew rather from a false image in their own minds, than from the great original.

In the conventual merit of bodily self-discipline, so far as it could be reconciled with his studious habits, Mabillon was emulous of the Trappists. His food, sleep, clothing, warmth, social intercourse, and other personal gratifications, were measured by the indispensable exigencies of nature; and his admirers describe his austere mortifications of the flesh with the fond delight of a Hindoo recounting his sacred legends of the spontaneous endurance of more than human sufferings. "Holy Obedience" dictated to her favourite child abasements and self-denials, which it is difficult to reconcile with decorum or with sincerity. If she had been wise, she would have summoned him to the nobler office of asserting that intellectual rank, and those claims to the reverence of mankind, which, like all the other good gifts of Providence, are designed for noble uses by the wise and gracious Author of them all.

Although the virtues of the convent, even in the person of Mabillon, excite but a reluctant admiration, and a still colder sympathy, yet his simple tastes, his devout spirit, and his affectionate nature, would, under a more genial discipline, have rendered his character as lovely as his diligence, his critical sagacity, and the extent of his knowledge were wonderful. For, soaring, in these respects, immeasurably above vulgar ascetics, he obeyed to the letter the command of his great patriarch Benedict, and devoted every moment of his life to some useful and energetic occupation.

In these pursuits Mabillon was not merely an indefatigable student, but a laborious traveller. In his time the treasures of which he was insatiably covetous were not accumulated in the Royal Library of Paris, but dispersed in the conventual, episcopal, and

other public archives of France, Belgium, Germany, and Italy. The journeys necessary for examining them had all the terrors of an exploration of the Nile to one whom (all Frenchman as he was) not even the enchanted gardens and terraces of Versailles had, during a period of twenty years, been able to seduce, for a single morning, from his seclusion at St Germain-des-Prés. But what antiquarian worthy of the name would be arrested by the Loire, the Meuse, the Rhine, or the Alps, when beyond these distant barriers a whole harem of virgin manuscripts wooed his embrace, glowing, like so many houris, with immortal youth, and rich in charms which increased with each revolving century? Sometimes alone, but more commonly attended by a Benedictine brother, he accomplished several *Capitulary* or *Diplomatic* tours through Flanders, Burgundy, Switzerland, the south of Germany, and the whole of the Italian peninsula. The earlier of those expeditions were made on foot, at the cost of his Order; the latter with the equipages becoming an agent of the Grand Monarque, employed by Colbert to collect or to transcribe manuscripts for his royal master. The results of these expeditions were various learned itineraries (such as his "*Iter Burgundicum*" and his "*Museum Italicum*"), and a prodigious accession to the wealth of the royal library. His services were rewarded by Louis with a seat in the Academy of Belles Lettres and Inscriptions. But the whole republic of letters united to confer on the learned traveller honours far exceeding any at the disposal of the greatest of the kings of the earth.

His journeys, especially his Italian journey, resembled royal progresses rather than the unostentatious movements of a humble monk. Monasteries contended for the honour of entertaining him as their guest. Fêtes celebrated his arrival in the greater cities of Italy. His society and correspondence were courted by the learned, the great, and the fair. The Pope, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, the Cardinals, and the Queen Christina vied in rendering courtesies to their illustrious visitor. At the Catacombs, at Loretto, at Clairvaux, and, above all, at Monte Casino, the devout assembled to witness and to partake of his devotions. All libraries flew open at his approach; nor did the revolutionary *sçavans* of France traverse the same regions or examine the same repositories with an authority comparable to that of the poor Benedictine, as he moved from one Italian state to another, — powerless except in the lustre of his reputation, the singleness of heart with which he pursued his object, and the love with which he was regarded by all his associates.

In M. Valéry's three volumes will be found an ample and curious diary of Mabillon's Italian expedition. He commenced it on the

1st of April, 1685, having selected as his companion Dom Michel Germain, another member of the congregation of St Maur. Germain had himself written some essays on monastic history ; but his chief title to literary honours was derived from his having ministered to the production of the "*Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*," and of the treatise "*De Re Diplomaticâ*."

The travellers had engaged to maintain a correspondence with three of their monastic associates. One of these was the faithful and affectionate Ruinart, of whom we already know something. Placide Porcheron, the next, seems to have been a member of the Dryasdust family, so celebrated by Walter Scott and Thomas Carlyle ; his two great performances being a commentary on an obscure geographical book of the seventh century, and notes on a treatise on Education written by Basil the Macedonian, who, two hundred years later, had been Emperor of the Greeks. Claude Bretagne, the third of the Committee of Correspondence at Paris, was the author of some devotional works, but was more eminent as the intimate friend of Nicole, and as a companion of infinite grace and wit, and of the most captivating discourse. It was arranged that letters should be addressed to Charles Bulteau also, who was not a monk, but "*Doyen des Secretaires du Roi*," and was famous for having, in that capacity, vindicated, with great learning, the supremacy of the King of France over the sovereigns of the Spanish monarchies.

When devout men, profound scholars, or still more profound antiquaries, engage in a prolonged epistolary intercourse, the reader is not without preconceptions of the mental aliment awaiting him. He has probably gone through some volumes in which Protestant divines interchange their religious experiences. The style in which Salmasius, Budæus, and Scaliger entertained their friends is not wholly unknown to him ; and how the Spelmans of old, and the Whitakers of recent times, wrote their letters, may be learnt at the expense of a transient fatigue. But let no one address himself to M. Valery's volumes with the hope or the fear of being involved in any topics more sacred, more crabbed, or more antiquated than befits an easy chair, a winter's evening, and a fireside. Reading more pleasant, or of easier digestion, is hardly to be met with in the Parisian epistles of Grimm, Diderot, or La Harpe.

Our pilgrims first take up the pen at Venice. They had ransacked the Ambrosian Library, examined the Temple of Venus at Brescia, admired the amphitheatre at Verona, and visited the monastery of their Order at Vicenza ; though, observes Germain, "*Ni là ni ailleurs, nos moines ne nous ont pas fait goûter de leur vin.*" Some gentlemen of the city having conducted them over it, "*On ne*

saurait," adds he, "faire attention sur le mérite et les manières honnêtes de ces messieurs, sans réfléchir sur nos moines et admirer leur insensibilité. Aussi n'étudient ils pas ; ils disent matins avant super ; ils mangent gras ; portent du linge, pour ne rien dire du *peculium*, et de leur sortie seuls." In short, there is already peeping out, from behind our good Germain's cowl, one of those Parisian countenances on the quick movable lines of which flashes of subacid merriment are continually playing.

On reaching Florence the migratory antiquarians form a new acquaintance, alike singular and useful, in the person of Magliabechi, the librarian of the Grand Duke. Another man at once so book-learned, so dirty, and so ill-favoured, could not have been found in the whole of Christendom. The Medicæan Library was his study, his refectory, and his dormitory ; though, except in the depth of winter, he saved the time of dressing and undressing, by sleeping in his clothes and on his chair ; his bed serving the while as an auxiliary book-stand. Fruit and salads were his fare ; and when sometimes an anchovy was served up with them, the worthy librarian, in an absent mood, would not unfrequently mistake and use it for sealing-wax. Partly from want of time, and partly from the consciousness that an accurate likeness of him would be a caricature on humanity at large, he would never allow his portrait to be taken ; though what the pencil was not permitted to do, the pens of his acquaintance have so attempted, that he would have judged better in allowing the painter to do his worst. Michel Germain describes him as "Varillas multiplied by three." Now Menage tells us that happening once to say that every man was hit off by some passage or other in Martial, and having been challenged to prove it with respect to Varillas, the most slovenly scholar of his acquaintance, he immediately quoted "*Dimidiasque nates Gallica palla tegit.*" Short indeed, then, must have been the skirts of Magliabechi, according to Germain's arithmetic.

His bibliographical appetite and digestion formed, however, a psychological phenomenon absolutely prodigious. Mabillon called him "Museum inambulans, et viva quædam bibliotheca." Father Finardi, with greater felicity, said of him, "Is unus bibliotheca magna," that being the anagram of his Latinised name, Antonius Magliabechius.

Having established a correspondence with this most learned savage, the Benedictines proceeded to Rome, where they were welcomed by Claude Estiennot, the procurator of their Order at the Papal court. He also devoted his pen to their entertainment. Light labour for such a pen ! within eleven years he had collected

and transcribed forty-five bulky folios, at the various libraries of his society in the several dioceses of France, adding to them, says Dom Le Cerf, "réflexions très sensées et judicieuses ;" a praise which probably no other mortal was ever able to gainsay or to affirm.

Germain found Rome agitated with the affair of the Quietists. His account of the dispute is rather facetious than theological. Just then a Spaniard had been sent to the galleys, and a priest to the gallows ; the first for talking, and the second for writing scandals, while the great Quietist Molinos was in the custody of the Inquisition. Marforio, says Germain, is asked by Pasquin why are you leaving Rome, and answers, "Chi parla è mandato in galera ; chi scrive è impiccato ; chi sta quieto va al sant' officio." Marforio had good cause for his hurry ; for the scandal which (as Germain pleasantly has it) "broke the priest's neck" was merely his having said that "the mare had knocked the snail out of its shell ;" in allusion to the fact of the Pope's having been forced out of his darling seclusion and repose, to be present at a certain festival, at which a mare or palfrey was also an indispensable attendant. "The rogues continue to repeat the jest notwithstanding," observes the reverend looker-on.

He gathered other pleasant stories, at the expense of his Holiness and these heretical aspirants after a devotional repose of the soul. Some of them are not quite manageable in our most fastidious times, without the aid of a thicker veil than he chose to employ. For example, he tells of a Quietist bishop who, to escape an imaginary pursuit of the police, scaled the roof of his mansion in his night-dress, and so, running along the tops of the adjacent houses, unluckily made his descent through one of them, into which he could not have entered, even in full canonicals and in broad day, without a grievous damage to his reputation. Then follows a fine buffo catastrophe, and when (says Germain) "the whole reaches the ears of Nostro Signore, the holy man has a good laugh, and orders the bishop to quit Rome without delay." Yet Germain himself breaks out into hot resentment against "the wretched and abandoned Molinos," and proposes to Magliabechi (in seeming seriousness) to arrest the progress of the evil, by publishing a manuscript discovered in their Italian tour, from which it would appear that the bones of a wicked Bohemian lady, of the name of Guillemine, who, three centuries before, had propagated nearly the same enormities, were at length taken, with public execration, out of her grave, and scattered to the winds.

Molinos, however, was strong in the protection of Christina, who then dwelt at Rome. Her abandonment of the faith of her illustrious

father, was accepted there, not only as a cover for a multitude of sins, but as an apology for the assumption of an independent authority beneath the very shadow of the Vatican. Mabillon, accompanied by Germain, presented to her his book "*De Liturgiâ Gallicanâ*," in which, to her exceeding discontent, she found herself described as "*Serenissima*." "My name," she exclaimed, "is Christina. That is eulogy enough. Never again call me, and admonish your Parisians never to call me, *Serenissima*." Germain left her with the fullest conviction that the epithet was altogether out of place; but "after all," he says, "she gave us free access to her library,—the best thing she could do for us." So great were her privileges, or such the weakness of the lazy Innocent XI., that, as we learn from these letters, an offender on his way to prison, having laid hold on the bars of one of her windows as a sanctuary, was violently rescued by her servants, whereupon they were tried and sentenced to be hanged. Christina wrote to the judge to inform him, that if her servants died any other than a natural death, *they should not die alone!* The judge complained to the Pope; but his Holiness laughed at the affair, and terminated it by sending her Majesty a peace-offering, which she contemptuously handed over to the complainant.

Germain looked upon the religious observances of Rome with the eye of a French encyclopediste. He declares that the Romans burn before the Madonna, and in their churches, more oil than the Parisians both burn and swallow. "Long live St Anthony!" he exclaims, as he describes the horses, asses, and mules all going, on the saint's festival, to be sprinkled with holy water, and to receive the benediction of a reverend father. "All would go to ruin, say the Romans, if this act of piety were omitted. So nobody escapes paying toll on this occasion, not Nostro Signore himself." Then follows an account of a procession to St Peter's, on the repetition of certain new converts, which is compressed into a single paragraph purposely long, intricate, and obscure; "a sentence," says Germain, "which I have drawn out to this length to imitate the ceremony itself." Soon after we meet him at the cemetery of Pontianus, "where," he observes with all the mock gravity of Bayle, "there lie 50,263 martyrs, without counting the women and children. Each of us was allowed to carry off one of these holy bodies. That which fell to my share had been too big for the hole in which it was found. I had infinite trouble in disinterring it, for it was quite wet, and the holy bones were all squeezed and jammed together. I am still knocked up with the labour."

The Pope himself fares no better than the ceremonies and relics of his church. "If I should attempt," he says, "to give you an exact

account of the health of his Holiness, I must begin with Ovid, 'In nova fert animus mutatas dicere formas.' At ten he is sick, at fifteen well again, at eighteen eating as much as four men, at twenty-four dropsical. They say he has vowed never to leave his room. If so, M. Struse declares that he can never get a dispensation, not even from himself, as his confinement will be *de jure divino*. The unpleasant part of the affair is, that they say he has given up all thoughts of creating new cardinals, forgetting in his restored health the scruples he felt when sick ; like other great sinners."

Indolent and hypochondriacal as he was, Innocent XI. had signalled himself, not only by the virtues which Burnet ascribes to him in his travels, but by two remarkable edicts. One of them, which could not be decorously quoted, regulated the appearance on the stage of certain classes of singers ; the other (under the penalties of six days' excommunication, and of incapacity for absolution, even in the article of death, save from the Pope himself), commanded all ladies to wear up to their chins, and down to their wrists, draperies *not* transparent. "The Queen of Spain," says our facetious Benedictine, "immediately had a new dress made, and sent it to her nuncio at Rome, to ascertain whether it tallied exactly with the ordinance : for," he continues (the inference is not very clear), "one must allow that Spanish ladies have not as much delicacy as our own."

He has another story for the exhilaration of St Germain-des-Prés, at the expense of both pope and cardinals. A party of the sacred college were astounded, after dinner, by the appearance of an austere Capuchin, who, as an unexpected addition to their dessert, rebuked their indolence and luxury, and their talkativeness even during High Mass. Then, passing onwards to an inner chamber, the preacher addressed his Holiness himself, on the sin of an inordinate solicitude about health—no inappropriate theme ; for he was lying in the centre of four fires, and beneath the load of seven coverlets, having recently sustained a surgical operation ; on which Germain remarks, that if it had taken place in summer, "it would have been all up with the holy man."

The Jesuits of course take their turn. At the table of the Cardinal Estrées, Mabillon and Germain meet the Father Couplet, who had passed thirty years in China. "I do not know," says Germain, "whether he was mandarin and mathematical apostle at the same time ; but he told us that one of his brethren was so eminent an astrologer as to have been created a mandarin of the third class. He said that another of them was raising himself by contemplation to the third heaven, before actually going there. I have my doubts about his success. However, Father Couplet told

us that he had a very numerous *Chrétienté*. 'My *Chrétienté*,' he frequently said, 'consists of more than 30,000 souls.' Do you believe his story, that there are forty millions of inhabitants in Pekin, and from two to three hundred millions in China at large? I do not."

This keen observer is not silent on the cold reception at Rome of the revocation of the Edict at Nantes. The arrogant claims of Louis XIV. on behalf of the Gallican Church and Crown had abated much of the enthusiasm with which the measure would otherwise have been hailed. "Well," observes Germain (one can see the rising of his shoulders as he writes), "a hundred years ago they took a very different tone about the Huguenots. They not only offered public thanksgiving on their massacre by Charles IX., but hung the walls of the royal hall in the Vatican with pictures of the murder of Coligny and of the butcheries of St Bartholomew. They still form its chief ornaments."

Even when accompanying Mabillon on a pilgrimage to the cradle of their Order at Monte Casino, Germain looks about him with the same esprit fort. "At the foot of the mountain," he says, "we found an inn, where we learned to fast, as we got nothing but some cabbages which I could not eat, some nuts, and one apple for our supper. Then we paid thirty francs for a wretched bed, which we divided between us, in the midst of bugs and fleas." On the next day they luckily fell in with the vicar-general of the Barnabites, a Frenchman, from whom (he says) "we got some cheese and preserves, and, finally, a glass of Lachryma; as he told us, to strengthen the stomach. Reaching at length the mansion of the abbé of Monte Casino, he made a fête for us, and bore witness to our excellent appetites."

Mabillon's devotion at the tomb of his patriarch is described as deep, fervent, and protracted. Germain sends to their friend Porcheron a picturesque account of the dress and aspect of the monks, an enthusiastic description of the library, a very pretty sketch of the adjacent country, with a graphic representation of the church and the ceremonial observed in it; and promises his correspondent "to say a mass for him at the foot of Benedict's tomb." With the exception of that assurance (whether grave or gay it is not easy to determine), the whole letter might have been written by Miss Martineau, and would have done no discredit even to her powers of converting her readers into her fellow-travellers.

Such of the letters comprised in this collection as are written by Mabillon himself, relate exclusively to the duties of his mission; and are grave and simple, though perhaps too elaborately courteous.

In the last volume are some contributions from Quesnel, whose singular fate it is to have been censured by the Pope, Clement XI., and eulogised by De Rancé the Trappist, by La Chaise the Jesuit, by Voltaire the Wit, and by Cousin the Philosopher. The pleasantries of Michel Germain and the freedoms of Estiennot are far from being the best things in M. Valéry's book. We have selected them rather as being the most apposite to our immediate purpose.

In this correspondence three of the most eminent of the congregation of St Maur transmit from Italy such intelligence and remarks as appear to them best adapted to interest other three of the most eminent of their brotherhood at Paris. If the table-talk of the refectory at St Germain-des-Prés was of the same general character, the monks there had no better title to the praise of an ascetic social intercourse, than the students or the barristers in the halls of Christ Church, or of Lincoln's Inn. It would be difficult to suppose an appetite for gossip more keen, or more luxuriously gratified.

The writers and the receivers of these letters were all men devoted by the most sacred vows to the duties of the Christian priesthood; yet in a confidential epistolary intercourse, extending through eighteen successive months, no one of them utters a sentiment, or discusses a question, from which it could be gathered that he sustained any religious office, or seriously entertained any religious belief whatever. It may be that our Protestant divines occasionally transgress the limits within which modesty should confine the disclosure, even to the most intimate friends, of the interior movements of a devout spirit. But all reverence to the memory of our Doddridges and Howes, our Venns and Newtons! whose familiar letters, if sometimes chargeable with a failure in that graceful reserve, yet always glow with a holy unction, and can at least never be charged with the frigid indifference which these learned Benedictines exhibit on the subjects to which they had all most solemnly devoted their talents and their lives.

Visiting, for the first time, the places which they regard as the centre of Christian unity, as the seat of apostolic dominion, as the temple towards which all the churches of the earth should worship, as the ever salient fountain of truth, and as the abode of him who impersonates to his brother men the Divine Redeemer of mankind, not a solitary word of awe or of tenderness falls from their pens—not a fold of those dark tunics is heaved by any throb of grateful remembrance or of exulting hope. They could not have traversed Moscow or Amsterdam with a more imperturbable phlegm; nor have sauntered along the banks of the Seine or the courts of the Louvre in a temper more perfectly debonnaire.

Protestant zeal may be sometimes rude, bitter, and contumelious in denouncing Roman Catholic superstitions. It is a fault to be sternly rebuked. But how adequately censure these reverend members of that communion, who, without one passing sigh, or one indignant phrase, depict the shameful abuses of the holiest offices of their Church, with cold sarcasms and heartless unconcern!

Rome combated her Protestant antagonists by the aid of the Jesuits in the world, and of the Benedictines in the closet. Yet to those alliances she owes much of the silent revolt against her authority which has characterised the last hundred years; and of which the progress is daily becoming more apparent. The Jesuits involved her in their own too well merited disesteem. The Benedictines have armed the philosophy both of France and Germany with some of the keenest weapons by which she has been assailed. It was an ill day for the Papacy, when the congregation of St Maur, at the instance of Benard, called the attention of their fellow-countrymen to the mediæval history of the Church, and invited the most enlightened generation of men whom Europe had ever seen, to study and believe a mass of fables of which the most audacious Grecian mythologist would have been ashamed, and at which the credulity of a whole college of augurs would have staggered.

It was but a too prolific soil on which this seed was scattered. At the moment when, in the integrity of his heart, Mabillon was propagating these legends, the walls of his monastery were often passed by a youth, whose falcon eye illuminated with ceaseless change one of the most expressive countenances in which the human soul had ever found a mirror. If the venerable old man had foreseen how that eye would one day traverse his Benedictine annals, in a too successful search for the materials of the most overwhelming ridicule of all which he held holy, he would cheerfully have consigned his unfinished volumes, and with them his own honoured name, to oblivion. Not so would Michel Germain, Claude Estiennot, and the brethren for whose amusement they wrote, have contemplated, if they could have foreknown, the approaching career of the young Arouet. Though they clung to the Church of Rome with all the ardour of partisans, and though their attachment to her was probably sincere, their convictions must have been faint, unripe, and wavering. The mists of doubt, though insufficient to deprive them of their faith in Christianity, had struck a damp and abiding chill into their hearts. If they had lived long enough to know the patriarch of Ferney, they would have been conscious of the close affinity between his spirit and their own.

How could it have been otherwise? From disinterring legends

and traditions revolting to their hearts and understandings, they passed to Rome, there to disinter foul masses of holy bones, to contemplate sacred processions of mules and asses, to find a corpulent, self-indulgent valetudinarian sustaining the character of the vicar of Christ, and to discover that the basest motives of worldly interest dictated to the Papal court the decisions for which they dared to claim a divine impulse and a divine infallibility. From such follies and such pretensions these learned persons turned away with immeasurable contempt. The freedom of thought which unveiled to them these frauds left them disgusted with error, but did not carry them forward to the pursuit of truth. Without the imbecility to respect such extravagances, they were also without the courage to denounce and repudiate them. Their superior light taught them to expose and ridicule religious error ;—it did not teach them to embrace unwelcome truth. In that book which is “the religion of Protestants,” they might have read that “the light is the life of men,”—that is, of men who obey and follow its guidance. There also they might have learned that “the light which is in us may be darkness,”—that is, may at once illuminate the inquisitive intellect, and darken the insensible heart. The letters which they have bequeathed to us, interesting as they are in other respects, afford melancholy proof how deeply the younger Benedictines of the congregation of St Maur were already imbued with the spirit of that disastrous philosophy, which was destined, before the lapse of another century, to subvert the ancient institutions of their native land, and with them, the venerable fabric of their own illustrious Order.

THE PORT-ROYALISTS.

ALL religions, and all ages, have their saints ; their men of un-earthly mould ; self-conquerors ; sublime even in their errors ; not altogether hateful in their very crimes. If a man would understand the dormant powers of his own nature, let him read the *Acta sanctorum*. Or, if "too high this price of knowledge," let him at least acquaint himself with the legends of the later heroes of the Gallican Church. Of all ascetics they were the least repulsive. They waged war on dulness with the ardour of Dangeau and St Simon, and with still better success. While macerating their bodies in the cloisters of Port-Royal, they did not cease to be French men and French women of the Augustan age. While practising the monastic virtue of silence, their social spirit escaped this unwelcome restraint, in a body of Memoirs as copious as those which record the splendour and the miseries of Versailles. A rapid sketch of the substance of those monastic chronicles may not be without its use in directing the attention of our readers to one of the most remarkable episodes in ecclesiastical history.

He whose journey lies from Versailles to Chevreuse, will soon find himself at the brow of a steep cleft or hollow, intersecting the monotonous plain across which he has been passing. The brook which winds through the verdant meadows beneath him, stagnates into a large pool, reflecting the mutilated Gothic arch, the water-mill, and the dovecot, which rise from its banks ; with the farmhouse, the decayed towers, the forest trees, and innumerable shrubs and creepers which clothe the slopes of the valley. France has many a lovelier prospect, though this is not without its beauty ; and many a field of more heart-stirring interest, though this, too, has been ennobled by heroic daring ; but through the length and breadth of that land of chivalry and of song, the traveller will in vain seek a spot so sacred to genius, to piety, and to virtue. That arch is all which remains of the once crowded monastery of Port-Royal. In those woods Racine first learned the language—the

universal language—of poetry. Under the roof of that humble farmhouse, Pascal, Arnauld, Nicole, De Saci, and Tillemont, meditated those works, which, as long as civilisation and Christianity survive, will retain their hold on the gratitude and reverence of mankind. There were given innumerable proofs of the graceful good humour of Henry IV. To this seclusion retired the heroine of the Fronde, Ann Genevieve, Duchess of Longueville, to seek the peace which the world could not give. Madame de Sévigné discovered here a place “tout propre à inspirer le désir de faire son salut.” From the Petit Trianon and Marly, there came hither to worship God, many a courtier and many a beauty, heart-broken or jaded with the very vanity of vanities—the idolatry of their fellow-mortals. Survey French society in the seventeenth century from what aspect you will, it matters not, at Port-Royal will be found the most illustrious examples of whatever imparted to that motley assemblage any real dignity or permanent regard. Even to the mere antiquarian, it was not without a lively interest.

At the eve of his departure to the conquest of the Holy Sepulchre, the good knight, Matthieu de Marli, cast a wistful gaze over the broad lands of his ancestors, and entrusted to his spouse, Mathilde de Garlande, the care of executing some work of piety by which to propitiate the Divine favour, and to insure his safe return. A Benedictine monastery, for the reception of twelve ladies of the Cistercian Order, was accordingly erected, in imitation of the Cathedral at Amiens, and by the same architect. Four centuries witnessed the gradual increase of the wealth and splendour of the foundation. Prelates of the houses of Sully and Nemours enlarged its privileges. Pope Honorius III. authorised the celebration of the sacred office within its walls, even though the whole country should be lying under a papal interdict; and of the host consecrated on the profession of a nun, seven fragments might be solemnly confided to her own keeping, that, for as many successive days, she might administer to herself the holy sacrament. Yet how arrest by spiritual immunities the earthward tendency of all sublunary things? At the close of the reign of Henry IV., the religious ladies of Port-Royal had learned to adjust their “*robes à grandes manches*” to the best advantage. Promenades by the margin of the lake relieved the tedium of monastic life. Gayer strains of music than those of the choir might be heard from the adjacent woods; and if a cavalier from Paris or Chevreuse had chanced to pursue his game that way, the fair musicians were not absolutely concealed nor inexorably silent. So lightly sat the burden of their vows on those

amiable recluses, that the gayest courtier might well covet for his portionless daughter the rank of their lady abbess.

Such at least was the judgment of M. Marion. He was advocate-general to Henry IV., and maternal grandfather of Jaqueline Marie Angelique, and of Agnes Arnauld. Jobbing is not one of the arts to the invention of which the moderns may lay claim. M. Marion obtained from "the father of his people" the *coadjuterie* of the Abbey of Port-Royal for the high-spirited Jaqueline, then in her eighth year; and that of St Cyr for the more gentle Agnes, over whom not more than five summers had passed. The young ladies renounced at once the nursery and the world. A single step conducted them from the leading strings to the veil. Before the completion of her first decade, Angelique, on the death of her immediate predecessor, found herself, in plenary right, the abbess and ruler of her monastery; and, in attestation of her spiritual espousals, assumed the title and the name of the Mère Angelique, by which she has since been celebrated in the annals of the Church.

To the Church, however, must not be imputed this breach of ecclesiastical discipline. In the ardour of his parental affections, the learned advocate-general was hurried into acts for which he would have consigned a criminal of lower degree to the galleys. He obtained the requisite bulls from Rome by forged certificates of his granddaughter's age; and to this treason against the Holy See, Henry himself was at least an accessory after the fact. Hunting in the valley of Port-Royal, the gay monarch trespassed on the precincts of the sacred enclosure. To repel the royal intruder, a child, bearing in her hand the crosier which bespoke her high conventual rank, issued from the gates of the abbey at the head of a solemn procession of nuns, and rebuked her sovereign with all the majesty of an infant Ambrose. Henry laughed and obeyed. Marion's detected fraud would seem to have passed for a good practical joke, and for nothing more. In the result, however, no occurrence ever contributed less to the comedy of life, or formed the commencement of a series of events more grave or touching. It would be difficult or impossible to discover, in the history of the Church, the name of any woman who has left so deep an impress of her character on the thoughts and the conduct of the Christian commonwealth.

The family of Arnauld held a conspicuous station among the noblesse of Provence, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In a later age a member of that house enjoyed the singular honour of at once serving Catharine de Medicis as her procureur-general, and of defeating, sword in hand, at the head of his servants, the force

sent to assassinate him on the day of St Bartholomew. Returning to the bosom of the church, which had thus roughly wooed him, he transmitted his fortune and his office to his son, Antoine Arnauld, the husband of Catharine Marion. They were the happy parents of no less than twenty children. Of these the youngest was the great writer, who has imparted to the name of Arnauld an imperishable lustre. Five of the daughters of the same house assumed the veil in the abbey of Port-Royal. Their mother, Catharine Marion, was admitted in her widowhood into that society. Pomponne, the minister of Louis XIV., Le Maitre, unrivalled among the masters of forensic eloquence in France, and De Saci, the author of the best version of the Holy Scriptures into the French language, were three of her grandsons. Before her death the venerable matron had seen herself surrounded, in the monastery and the adjoining hermitages, by eighteen of her descendants in the first and second generations; nor until the final dispersion of the sisterhood, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, had the posterity of Antoine and Catharine Arnauld ceased to rule in the house of which the Mère Angelique had, seventy years before, been the renowned reformer.

To those who believe that the psychological distinction of the sexes may be traced to physical causes; and that, where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, those distinctions will for ever disappear, the character of Angelique is less perplexing than to the advocates of the opposite theory. Her understanding, her spirit, and her resolves, were all essentially masculine. She was endued with the various faculties by which man either extorts or wins dominion over his fellow-men;—with address, courage, fortitude, self-reliance, and an unfaltering gaze fixed on objects at once too vast to be measured, and too remote to be discerned, but by the all-searching eye of faith. Among the Israelites of old, she would have assumed the office of Judge; or would have given out oracles in the forests of ancient Germany. Born in the reign, and educated near the court, of a Bourbon, the lighter and more gentle elements of her nature found exercise even under the paralysing influences of an ascetic life; for Angelique was gay and light of heart, and St Benedict himself might have forgiven or applauded the playful sallies of his votary. In scaling the heights of devotion, she could call to her own aid, and that of others, all the resources of the most plaintive or impassioned music. To flowers, and the glad face of nature, she gave back their own smiles with a true woman's sympathy. With such literature as might be cultivated within the walls of her convent, she was intimately conversant; and would

have eclipsed Madame de Sévigné's epistolary fame, had it been permitted to her to escape from theological into popular topics. Concentrated within a domestic circle, and bestowed on a husband or a child, the affections which she poured out on every human being who claimed her pity, would have burned with a flame as pure and as intense as was ever hymned in poetry, or dreamt of in romance. A traveller on the highways of the world, she must have incurred every peril except that of treading an obscure and inglorious path. Immured by supersition in a cloister, she opened the way at once to sublunary fame and to an immortal recompense; and has left an example as dangerous as it may be seductive to feebler minds who, in a desperate imitation of such a model, should hazard a similar self-devotion.

Angelique, indeed, might be fitted for a nunnery; for such was the strength, and such the sacred harmony, of her spirit, that whilst still a sojourner on earth, she seemed already a denizen of heaven. When a child, she understood as a child; enjoying the sports, the rambles, and the social delights which the habits of Port-Royal had not then forbidden. With advancing years came deeper and more melancholy thoughts. She felt, indeed, (how could she but feel?) the yearnings of a young heart for a world where love and homage awaited her. But those mysteries of our being of which the most frivolous are not altogether unconscious, pressed with unwonted weight on her. A spouse of Christ—a spiritual mother of those who sustained the same awful character—her orisons, her matins, and her vesper chants, accompanied by unearthly music and by forms of solemn significance—the Gothic pile beneath which she sat enthroned—and the altar where, as she was taught, the visible presence of her Redeemer was daily manifested—all spoke to her of a high destiny, a fearful responsibility, and of objects for which all sublunary ties might well be severed, and a sacrifice wisely made of every selfish feeling. Nor need a Protestant fear to acknowledge, that on a heart thus consecrated to the service of her Maker, rested the holy influence, familiar to all who meekly adore the great source of wisdom, and reverently acquiesce in his will. As a science, religion consists in the knowledge of the relations between God and man; as a living principle, in the exercise of the corresponding affections; as a rule of duty, in the performance of the actions which those affections prescribe. The principle may thrive in healthful life and energy, though the science be ill understood, and the rule imperfectly apprehended. For, after all, the great command is Love; and He from whom that command

proceeded, is himself Love ; and amidst all the absurdities (for such they were) of her monastic life, Angelique was still conscious of the presence of a Father, and found the guidance of a friend.

When, at the age of eleven years, Angelique became the abbess of Port-Royal, few things were less thought of by the French ladies of the Cistercian Order than the rule of their austere founder. During the wars of the League, religion, by becoming a watchword, had almost ceased to be a reality. Civil war, the apology for every crime, had debased the national character ; and the profligacy of manners which the last generation expiated by their sufferings, may be distinctly paid back to the age of which Davila has written the political, and Bassompierre the social history. Society will still exert a powerful influence even over those by whom it has been abandoned. When Gabrielle d'Etrees reigned at the Louvre, beads were told and masses sung in neighbouring cloisters, by vestals who, in heathen Rome, would have been consigned to a living sepulchre. In a monastery, the spiritual thermometer ranges from the boiling to the freezing point, with but few intermediate pauses. From the ecstasies of devotion there is but one step to disgust, and thence to sensuality, for most of those who dare to forego the aids to piety and virtue which Divine wisdom has provided in the duties and the affections of domestic life.

While this downward progress was advancing at Port-Royal, it happened that a Capuchin friar sought and obtained permission to preach there. Of the man himself, the chroniclers of the house have left a scandalous report ; but they gratefully acknowledge the efficacy of his sermon. Angelique listened, and was converted. Such, at least, is her own statement : and unstirred be all the theological questions connected with it. How deep was the impression on her mind, may be gathered from her own words :—"Often," she exclaims, "did I wish to fly a hundred leagues from the spot, and never more to see my father, mother, or kindred, dearly as I love them. My desire was to live apart from every one but God, unknown to any human being, concealed and humble, with no witness but himself, with no desire but to please him." Her dignity as abbess she now regarded as a burden. Even her projected reforms had lost their interest. To live where her holy aspirations *would* be thwarted, and where examples of holiness would *not* be found, was to soar to a more arduous, and therefore a more attractive sphere of self-denial. That such fascinations should dazzle a young lady in her seventeenth year, is, it must be confessed, no very memorable prodigy ; but to cherish no ineffectual emotions was one of the characteristics of the Mère Angelique ; as it is, indeed, of all powerful

minds. To abdicate her ecclesiastical rank, and, by breathing a tainted moral atmosphere, to nourish, by the force of contrast, the loftier Christian graces, were purposes ultimately executed, though for a while postponed. She paused only till the sisterhood of Port-Royal should have acquired, from her example or teaching, that sanctity of manners in which her creed informed her that the perfection of our nature consists. To the elder ladies, the prospect had few charms. But the will of their young abbess prevailed. They laid at her feet their separate possessions, abandoned every secular amusement, and, closing the gates of their monastery against all strangers, retired to that uninterrupted discharge of their spiritual exercises to which their vows had consigned them. Much may be read, in the conventual annals, of the contest with her family to which the Mère Angelique was exposed by the last of these resolutions. On a day, subsequently held in high esteem as the "Journée du Guichet," her parents and M. D'Andilly, her eldest brother, were publicly excluded, by her mandate, from the hallowed precincts, despite their reproaches and their prayers, and the filial agonies of her own heart. That great sacrifice accomplished, the rest was easy. Poverty resumed his stern dominion. Linen gave place to the coarsest woollens. Fasting and vigils subdued the lower appetites; and Port-Royal was once more a temple whence the sacrifices of devotion rose with an unextinguished flame to heaven, thence, as it was piously believed, to draw down an unbroken stream of blessings upon earth.

Far different were the strains that arose from the neighbouring abbey of Maubisson, under the rule of Mde d'Etrees. That splendid mansion, with its dependent baronies and forests, resembled far more the palace and gardens of Armida, than a retreat sacred to penitence and prayer. She was the sister of the too famous Gabrielle, to whose influence with Henry she was indebted for this rich preferment. Indulging without restraint, not merely in the luxuries but in the debaucheries of the neighbouring capital, she had provoked the anger of the king, and the alarm of the General of the Order. A visitation of the house was directed. Madame d'Etrees imprisoned the visitors, and well-nigh starved them. A second body of delegates presented themselves. Penances, at least when compulsory, were not disused at Maubisson. The new commissioneis were locked up in a dungeon, regaled with bread and water, and soundly whipped every morning. Supported by a guard, the General himself then hazarded an encounter with the formidable termagant. He returned with a whole skin, but boasting no other advantage. Next appeared at the abbey gates a band

of archers. After two days of fruitless expostulation, they broke into the enclosure. Madame now changed her tactics. She took up a defensive position, till then unheard of in the science of strategy. In plain terms she went to bed. A more embarrassing manœuvre was never executed by Turenne or Condé. The siege was turned into a blockade. Hour after hour elapsed ; night succeeded to day, and day to night ; but still the abbess was recumbent—unapparelled,—unapproachable. Driven thus to choose between a ludicrous defeat and a sore scandal, what Frenchman could longer hesitate ? Bed, blankets, abbess and all, were raised on the profane shoulders of the archers, lifted into a carriage, and most appropriately turned over to the keeping of the *Filles Penitentes* at Paris.

And now was to be gratified the lofty wish of Angelique to tread in paths where, unsustained by any human sympathy, she might cast herself with an undivided reliance on the Arm which she knew could never fail her. From the solemn repose of Port-Royal, she was called, by the General of the Order, to assume the government of the ladies of Maubisson. Thetis passing from the ocean caves to the Grecian camp, did not make a more abrupt transition. At Maubisson, the compromise between religious duties and earthly pleasures was placed on the most singular footing. Monks and nuns sauntered together through the gardens of the monastery, or angled in the lakes which watered them. Fêtes were celebrated in the arbours with every pledge except that of temperance. Benedictine cowls and draperies were blended in the dance with the military uniform and the stiff brocades of their secular guests ; and the evening closed with cards and dice and amateur theatricals, until the curtain fell on scenes than which none could more require that friendly shelter. Toil and care might seem to have fled the place, or rather to have been reserved exclusively for the confessor. Even for him relief was provided. Considerately weighing the extent of the labours which they habitually imposed on him, his fair penitents drew up for their common use certain written forms of self-arraignment, to which he, with equal tenderness, responded by other established forms of conditional absolution.

But the Lady entered, and Comus and his crew fled the hallowed ground which they had thus been permitted to defile. She entered with all the majesty of faith, tempered by a meek compassion for the guilt she abhorred, and strong in that virgin purity of heart which can endure unharmed the contact even of pollution. “Our health and our lives may be sacrificed,” she said to her associates in this work of mercy ; “but the work is the work of God :” and in the strength of God she performed it. Seclusion from the world

was again established within the refectory and the domain of Maubisson. Novices possessing a "genuine vocation" were admitted. Angelique directed at once the secular and the spiritual affairs of the convent. All the details of a feudal principality, the education of the young, the care of the sick, the soothing of the penitents, the management of the perverse, the conduct of the sacred offices, alternately engaged her time; and in each she exhibited a gentleness, a gaiety, and a firmness of mind, before which all resistance gave way. The associates of Madame d'Etrees retained their love of good cheer, and Angelique caused their table to be elegantly served. They sang deplorably out of tune, and the young abbess silently endured the discord which racked her ear. To their murmurs she answered in her kindest accents. Their indolence she rebuked only by performing the most menial offices in their service; and she inculcated self-denial by assigning to herself a dormitory which, to say the truth, would have much better suited the house-dog. The record of the strange and even sordid self-humiliations to which she thought it right to bow, can hardly be read without a smile; but, whatever may have been the errors of her creed, a more touching picture has never been drawn of the triumphs of love and of wisdom, than in the record left by Madame Suireau des Anges of this passage of the life of Angelique Arnould.

But Madame d'Etrees was not yet at the end of her resources. A company of young men, under the guidance of her brother-in-law, the Count de Sauzé, were observed one evening to loiter near the house of the *Filles Penitentes*. By the next morning she was, under their escort, at the gates of Maubisson. Burst open by main force, they again admitted the ejected abbess. The servant who opposed her entrance was chastised on the spot. Patients who now occupied as an hospital the once sumptuous chambers of the Abbatial lodge, instantly found themselves in much more humble lodgings. Cooks resumed their long-neglected art, and Madame d'Etrees provided a dinner worthy of her former hospitality and her recent privations. But in the presence of Angelique, the virago was abashed. To intimidate or to provoke her rival proved alike impossible: it might be more easy to overpower her. De Sauzé and his confederates made the attempt. They discharged their pistols and flourished their drawn swords over her head, with unmanly menaces. She remained unmoved and silent. The screams which the occasion demanded, were accordingly supplied by the intrusive abbess. Clamour and outrage were alike ineffectual. At length Madame d'Etrees and her respectable confessor, aided by De Sauzé, laid their hands on Angelique, and thrust her from the precincts of

the monastery. Thirty of the nuns followed her in solemn procession. Their veils let down, their eyes cast on the earth, and their hands clasped in prayer, they slowly moved to a place of refuge in the neighbouring town of Pontoise.

But, alas, for the vanity of human triumphs!—waving banners and burnished arms glittered through the advancing column of dust on the road from Paris to Maubisson. Scouts announced the approach of two hundred and fifty well-appointed archers. Madame d'Etrees and her cavaliers escaped by the postern. A desperate leap saved the worthless life of her confessor. Her partisan, the Mère de la Sure, “a nun by profession, but otherwise resembling a trooper,” mounted through a trap-door to a hiding-place in the ceiling, thence to be shamefully dragged by an archer, whom she still more shamefully abused. Then might be seen through the gloom of night, a train of priests and nuns drawing near with measured steps to the venerable abbey; on either side a double file of cavalry, and in each horseman's hand a torch, illuminating the path of the returning exiles. Angelique resumed her benignant reign; but not in peace. Brigands led by De Sauzé, and encouraged by her rival, haunted the neighbouring forests; and, though protected by the archers, the monastery remained in a state of siege. Shots were fired through the windows, and the life of Angelique was endangered. Strong in the assurance of Divine protection, she demanded and obtained the removal of the guard. Her confidence was justified by the event. Madame d'Etrees was discovered, was restored to her old quarters at the *Filles Penitentes*, and in due time transferred—not without good cause—to the Chatelet; there to close in squalid misery, in quarrels, and intemperance, a career which might, with almost equal propriety, form the subject of a drama, a homily, or a satire.

For five successive years Angelique laboured to bring back the ladies of Maubisson to the exact observance of their sacred vows. Aided by her sister Agnes, the abbess of St Cyr, she established a similar reform in a large proportion of the other Cistercian nunneries of France. All obstacles yielded to their love, their prudence, and their self-devotion. A moral plague was stayed, and excesses which even the sensual and the worldly condemned, were banished from the sanctuaries of religion. That in some, the change was but from shameless riot to hypocritical conformity; that in others, intemperance merely gave way to mental lethargy; and that even the most exalted virtues of the cloister hold but a subordinate and an equivocal place in the scale of Christian graces, is indeed but too true: yet assuredly it was in no such critical spirit as this, that the

labours of Angelique were judged and accepted by Him, in the lowly imitation of whom she had thus gone about doing good. "She has done what she could," was the apology with which He rescued from a like cold censure the love which had expressed itself in a costly and painful sacrifice; nor was the gracious benediction which rewarded the woman of Bethany withheld from the abbess of Port-Royal. To that tranquil home she bent her steps, there to encounter far heavier trials than any to which the resentment of Madame d'Etrees had exposed her.

Accompanied by a large number of the nuns of Maubisson, Angelique returned to the valley of Chevreuse. They brought with them neither silver nor gold, though rich in treasures of a far higher price in the account of their devout protectress. Poverty, disease, and death, were however in their train. Rising from the marshes below, a humid fog hung continually on the slopes of the adjacent hills, and the now crowded monastery was soon converted into one great hospital. But for a timely transfer of the whole establishment to a hotel purchased for them by the mother of Angelique in the Faubourg St Jacques at Paris, their remaining history might all have been compressed into a chapter on the influence of *malaria*.

The restoration of the community to health was not, however, the most momentous consequence of the change. It introduced the abbess to the society and the influence of Hauranne de Verger, the abbot of St Cyran, one of the most memorable names in the ecclesiastical annals of that age. When Richelieu was yet a simple bishop, he distinguished among the crowd of his companions one whose graceful bearing, open countenance, learning, gaiety, and wit, revealed to his penetrating glance the germs of future eminence. But to an eye dazzled by such prospects as were already dawning on the ambitious statesman, those which had arrested the upward gaze of his young associate were altogether inscrutable. With what possible motive De Verger should for whole days bury himself in solitude, and chain down that buoyant spirit to the study of the Greek and Latin fathers, was one of the few problems which ever engaged and baffled the sagacity of M. de Luçon. They parted; the prelate to his craft, the student to his books; the one to extort the reluctant admiration of the world, the other to toil and to suffer in the cause of piety and truth. They met again; the cardinal to persecute, and the abbot to be his victim. Death called them both to their account; leaving to them in the world they had agitated or improved, nothing but historical names, as forcibly contrasted as they had been strangely associated.

Great men (and to few could that title be more justly given than to Richelieu) differ from other men chiefly in the power of self-multiplication; in knowing how to make other men adopt their views and execute their purposes. Thus to subjugate the genius of St Cyran, the great minister had spared neither caresses nor bribes. The place of first almoner to Henrietta of England, the bishoprics of Clermont and Bayonne, a choice among numerous abbacies, were successively offered and refused. "Gentlemen, I introduce to you the most learned man in Europe," was the courteous phrase by which the Cardinal made known the friend of his youth to the courtiers who thronged his levee. But human applause had lost its charm for the ear of St Cyran. The retired and studious habits of his early days had not appeared more inexplicable to the worldly-minded statesman than his present indifference. Self-knowledge had made Richelieu uncharitable. Incredulous of virtues of which he detected no type in the dark recesses of his own bosom, he saw in his former companion a treacherous enemy, if not a rival. There were secrets of his early life of which he seems to have expected and feared the disclosure. St Cyran was at least the silent, and might become the open, enemy of the declaration by which the parliament and clergy of Paris had annulled the marriage of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, in order to pave the way for his union with the niece of the Cardinal. To his long-cherished scheme of erecting the kingdom of France into a Patriarchate in his own favour, there could arise no more probable or more dangerous opponent. To these imaginary or anticipated wrongs, was added another, which seems to have excited still more implacable resentment. An aspirant after every form of glory, Richelieu had convinced himself, and required others to believe, that his literary and theological were on a level with his political powers. He was the author of a Catechism where might be read the dogma, that contrition alone, uncombined in the heart of the penitent with any emotions of love towards the Deity, was sufficient to justify an absolution at the Confessional. One Seguenot, a priest of the Oratory, maintained and published the opposite opinion. Rumour denied to Seguenot the real parentage of the book which bore his name, and ascribed it to St Cyran. From speculations on the love of God to feelings of hatred to man, what polemic will not readily pass, whether his cap be red or black? Seguenot's errors were denounced by the Sorbonne, and the poor man himself was sent to the Bastille, there, during the rest of his great opponent's life, to obtain clearer views on the subject of contrition. Impartial injustice required that the real, or imputed, should fare no better than the nominal author;

and St Cyran was conducted to Vincennes, to breathe no more the free air of heaven till Richelieu himself should be laid in the grave.

Never had that gloomy fortress received within its walls a man better fitted to endure with composure the utmost reverses of fortune. To him, as their patriarch or founder, the whole body of the Port-Royalists, with one voice, attribute not merely a pre-eminence above all their other teachers, but such a combination of intellectual powers and Christian graces, as would entitle him not so much to a place in the calendar, as to a place apart from, and above, the other luminaries in that spiritual galaxy. Make every deduction from their eulogies which a rational scepticism may suggest, and it will yet be impossible to evade the accumulated proofs on which they claim for St Cyran the reverence of mankind. Towards the close of the first of the four volumes which he has dedicated to the attempt, Claude Lancelot confesses and laments the difficulty of conveying to others by words any definite image of the sublime and simple reality which he daily contemplated with more than filial reverence. He describes a man moving through the whole circle of the virtues which the Gospel inculcates, with a step so firm as to indicate the constant aid of a more than human power, and with a demeanour so lowly as to bespeak an habitual consciousness of that Divine presence. He depicts a moral hero, by whom every appetite had been subdued, and every passion tranquillised, though still exquisitely alive to the pains and the enjoyments of life, and responding with almost feminine tenderness to every affectionate and kindly feeling—a master of all erudition, but never so happy as when imparting to little children the elementary truths on which his own heart reposed—grave, nay, solemn in discourse, but with tones so gentle, a wisdom so profound, and words of such strange authority to animate and to soothe the listener, that, in comparison with his, all other colloquial eloquence was wearisome and vapid—rebuking vice far less by stern reproof than by the contrast of his own serene aspect, at once the result and the reflection of the perfect peace in which his mind continually dwelt,—exhibiting a transcript, however rudely and imperfectly, yet faithfully drawn, of the great example to which his eye was ever turned, and where, averting his regard from all inferior models, it was his wont to study, to imitate, and to adore. In short, the St Cyran of Lancelot's portraiture is one of those rare mortals whose mental health is absolute and unimpaired—whose character consists not so much in the excellence of particular qualities, as in the symmetry, the balance, and the well-adjusted harmonies of all—who concentrate their energies in one mighty object,

because they live under the habitual influence of one supreme motive—who are ceaselessly animated by a love embracing every rational being, from Him who is the common parent of the rest, to the meanest and the vilest of those who were originally created in His image and likeness.

Nor was Lancelot a man inapt to discriminate. He was the author of the Port-Royal Grammars, Greek, Latin, and Italian, now fallen into disuse, but so well known to such of us as ploughed those rugged soils during the first ten years of the present century. His biographical labours are not without a tinge of his style as a grammarian ;—a little tedious perhaps, and not a little prolix and over-methodical, but replete in almost every page with such touches of genuine dignity in the master, and cordial reverence in the disciple—with a sympathy so earnest for the virtues he celebrates, and so simple-hearted a consciousness of his own inferiority—that, in the picture he undesignedly draws of himself, he succeeds more than in any other way in raising a lofty conception of the man by whom he was held in such willing and grateful subjugation. And he had many fellow-subjects. Richelieu himself had felt his daring spirit awed by the union, in the friend of his youth, of a majestic repose and unwearied activity, which compelled the great minister to admit that the heart of man might envelope mysteries beyond his divination. Pascal, Nicole, Arnauld, and many others, eminent in that age for genius and piety, submitted themselves to his guidance in their studies as well as in their lives, with the implicit deference of children awaiting the commands of a revered and affectionate father. He was a most voluminous writer ; but of his published works, one only attained a transient celebrity, and of that book his authorship was more than doubtful. If he did not disown, he never claimed it. Of the innumerable incidents recorded of him during his imprisonment at Vincennes, few are more characteristic than the sale of a considerable part of a scanty collection of books he had brought there, to purchase clothes for two of his fellow-prisoners, the Baron and Baroness de Beau Soleil. “I entreat you,” he says to the lady to whom he gave this commission, “that the cloth may be fine and good, and befitting their station in society. I do not know what is becoming ; but, if I remember, some one has told me that gentlemen and ladies of their condition ought not to be seen in company without gold lace for the men, and black lace for the women. If I am right about this, pray purchase the best, and let everything be done modestly, yet handsomely, that when they see each other, they may, for a few minutes at least, forget that they are captives.” It is in the moral, rather than in the intellectual, qualities of St Cyran, that

his claim to the veneration of posterity must now be rested. He occupies a place in ecclesiastical history as the founder of Jansenism in France.

Of that system of religious belief and practice, the origin is to be traced to the joint labours of St Cyran and Cornelius Jansen, during the six years which they passed in social study at Bayonne. Returning to his native country, Jansen became first a Professor of Divinity at Louvain, and afterwards Bishop of Ypres. There he surrendered himself to a life of unremitting labour. Ten times he read over every word of the works of Augustine; thirty times he studied all those passages of them which relate to the Pelagian controversy. All the Fathers of the Church were elaborately collated for passages illustrative of the opinions of the Bishop of Hippo. At length, after an uninterrupted study of twenty years, was finished the celebrated *Augustinus Cornelii Jansenii*. With St Austin as his text and guide, the good Bishop proceeded to establish, on the authority of that illustrious Father, those doctrines which, in our times and country, have been usually distinguished by the terms Calvinistic or Evangelical. Heirs of guilt and corruption he considered the human race, and each successive member of it, as lying in a state of condemnation, and as advancing towards a state of punishment; until an internal impulse from on high awakens one and another to a sense of this awful truth, and infuses into them a will to fly from impending vengeance. But this impulse is imparted only to the few; and on them it is bestowed in pursuance of a decree existing in the Divine intelligence before the creation of our species. Of the motives of their preference not even a conjecture can be formed. So far as human knowledge extends, it is referable simply to the Divine volition; and is not dependent on any inherent moral difference between the objects of it, and those from whom such mercy is withheld. This impulse is not, however, irresistible. Within the limits of his powers, original or imparted, man is a free agent;—free to admit and free to reject the proffered aid. If rejected, it enhances his responsibility—if admitted, it leads him by continual accessions of the same supernatural assistance to an acquiescence in those opinions, to the exercise of those affections, and to the practice of those virtues, which collectively form the substance of the Christian system.

Such is the general result of the labours of Jansen. On the day which witnessed the completion of them, he was removed by the plague to a state of being where he probably learned at once to rejoice in the fidelity, and to smile at the simplicity, of those sublunary toils. Within an hour of his death he made a will, submitting

his work to the judgment of the Church of Rome, in the communion of which he had lived, and was about to die. He addressed to Pope Urban VIII. a letter, laying the fruits of his studies at the feet of his Holiness, "approving, condemning, advancing, or retracting, as should be prescribed by the thunder of the apostolic see." Both the will and the letter were suppressed by his executors. Two years from the death of its author had not elapsed before the *Augustinus* appeared in print. It was the signal of a contest which for nearly seventy years agitated the Sorbonne and Versailles, fired the enthusiasm of the ladies and the divines of France, and gave to her historians and her wits a theme, used with fatal success, to swell the tide of hatred and of ridicule, which has for ever swept away the temporal greatness, and which for a while silenced the spiritual ministrations, of the Gallican Church.

Having aided largely in the composition of this memorable treatise, St Cyran exerted himself with still greater effect in building up a society for the maintenance and promulgation of the principles it established. Angelique Arnauld and the sisterhood of Port-Royal were now settled at Paris, but they were still the proprietors of the deserted monastery; and there were gradually assembled a college of learned men, bound by no monastic vows, and living according to no positive rule, Benedictine or Franciscan. They were chiefly disciples of St Cyran, and under his guidance had retired from the world to consecrate their lives to penitence, to their own spiritual improvement, and to the instruction of mankind.

Of this number was Antoine Le Maitre. At the age of twenty-seven, he had been advanced to the rank of Councillor of State, and enjoyed at the bar an unrivalled reputation for learning and for eloquence. When he was to speak, even the churches were abandoned. Quitting their pulpits, the preachers assisted to throng the hall of the palace of justice; and some of the most celebrated among them actually obtained from their superiors a permanent dispensation from their ecclesiastical duties at such seasons, that they might improve in the art of public speaking by listening to the great advocate. When he spoke, the delight of the audience broke out into bursts of applause, which the judges were unable or unwilling to repress. "I would rather be the object of those plaudits than enjoy all the glory of my Lord the Cardinal," was the somewhat hazardous exclamation of one of his friends, as he joined, heart and hand, in the universal tumult.

Far different was the estimate which his devout mother had formed of the prospects of her son. She was one of the sisters of Angelique Arnauld; and, amidst the cares of conjugal life, cherished

a piety at least as pure and as ardent as ever burned in the bosom of a Carthusian. In the wealth and glory which rewarded his forensic eminence she could see only allurements to which (so she judged) his peace on earth, and his meetness for a holier state of being beyond the grave, must be sacrificed. She mourned over his fame, and prayed that her child might be abased, that so in due season he might be exalted. It happened that his aunt, Madame D'Andilly, in the last awful scene of life, was attended by her kindred, and amongst the rest by Le Maitre. Her fading eye was fixed on the crucifix borne in the hand of St Cyran, as she listened to his voice, now subdued to its gentlest accents, and breathing hope, and peace, and consolation. It was as though some good angel had overpassed the confines of the earthly and the heavenly worlds, to give utterance, in human language, to emotions sacred as his own high abode, and to thoughts as lofty as his own celestial nature. The great orator listened, and wondered, and wept. An eloquence such as even his fervent imagination had never before conceived, enthralled and subdued his inmost soul. It was but a soft whisper in the chamber of death; but in those gentle tones, and to that weeping company, were spoken words, compared with which his own eloquence appeared to him trivial, harsh, and dissonant as the howlings of the forest. And when his dying relative's last sigh was heard, accompanied by the solemn benediction, "Depart, O Christian soul! from this world, in the name of the Almighty God who created you," Le Maitre felt that the bonds which attached him to that world were for ever broken. He yielded himself to the spiritual guidance of St Cyran; resigned his office and his calling; and plunged into a retreat, where in solitude, silence, and continued penances, he passed the remaining twenty-one years of his life. By the advice of his confessor, the execution of this design was postponed till the close of the annual session of the courts. In the interval he resumed his ordinary employments; but the spirit which till then had animated his efforts was gone. He became languid and unimpressive; and one of the judges was heard to mutter, that, after all, the real power of Le Maitre was that of persuading to sleep. This was too much, even for a penitent. Fixing his eye on the critic, he once more summoned his dormant strength, and pouring forth all the energies of his soul in one last and most triumphant speech, he for ever quitted the scene of his forensic glories.

At Port-Royal he appropriately charged himself with the care of the proprietary interests of the house. A village judge in the neighbourhood was once attended by the illustrious advocate, on a question of the purchase of some bullocks. Astounded by his

eloquence (so runs the story), the judge fell on his knees before the pleader, professing his unworthiness to preside in his presence, and imploring that they might exchange places. A more likely tale records that the booksellers had got up, during Le Maitre's retreat, an edition of his speeches full of interpolations and errors. At "the request of friends," though not with the consent of his confessors, the orator undertook a corrected edition. His spiritual guides interfered. They prescribed, as a new species of penance, that he should silently acquiesce in this inroad on his fame as a speaker. The penitent submitted, but not so the booksellers. They (worldly men !) talked loudly of violated promises, and of sheets rendered useless. He listened to discourses on the duty of mortifying these last movements of vain-glory. Under the excitement of the dispute, his health, already enfeebled by his mode of life, gave way. A fever decided the question against the publishers ; and Le Maitre was doomed at length to die the victim of the brilliant career he had so long and resolutely abandoned.

His brother, Mons. de Sericourt, was another of the converts of St Cyran. De Sericourt had served with distinction under Condé. He was taken prisoner at the siege of Philipsburg, and effected his escape by leaping from the walls of the fortress at the imminent hazard of his life. Under the deep impression, which this incident left on his mind, of the protecting care of Providence, he returned to Paris, where his first object was to visit his brother, the report of whose retreat from the bar had filled him with astonishment. He found him (the words are Fontaine's) in a kind of tomb, where he was buried alive ; his manner bespeaking all the gloom of penitence. De Sericourt was shocked, and in vain endeavoured to recognise Le Maitre in the person who stood before him. Immediately changing his demeanour, Le Maitre embraced his brother with looks full of gaiety and spirit, exclaiming, " Behold the Le Maitre of former days ! He is dead to the world, and now desires only to die to himself. I have spoken enough to men. Henceforth I wish to converse only with God. I have exerted myself in vain to plead the cause of others. Now I am to plead my own. Do you intend to pay me the same compliment which I receive from the world at large, who believe and publish that I have gone mad ? " Nothing could be more remote from the judgment of the soldier. Instead of regarding his brother as mad, he aspired to share his solitude, and succeeded. Under the direction of St Cyran, he joined in the silence and austerities of the advocate. During the war of the princes he once more took up arms for the defence of Port-Royal ; but his monastic life was soon brought to a close. Philipsburg had in reality been at-

tended with less danger. At the age of thirty-nine, he died, a premature victim to fastings, vigils, confinement, and probably to ennui. Recruits for Port-Royal were but seldom drawn from the armies of the Most Christian King, and could hardly have been draughted from a less promising quarter.

In this memorable brotherhood there was yet a third, Louis Isaac Le Maitre de Saci. At the early age of fourteen he was placed by his aunt, the Mère Angelique, under the guidance of St Cyran. From that prophetic eye the future eminence of his pupil was not hidden. "God will restore him to you, for his death would probably be the greatest loss which the Church could sustain"—was the prediction with which St Cyran at once disclosed his own hopes and allayed the fears of De Saci's mother, as he watched over the sick-bed of her child. To ensure the fulfilment of those hopes, the mind of the boy was sedulously trained. Absolute, unhesitating submission to human authority, as representing the Divine, was the cardinal principle of his education. Though himself one of the most conspicuous teachers of his age as a guide to others, he, on no single question, presumed to guide himself. If no other director could have been had, he would have placed himself under the direction of his valet, was the praise with which his friends expressed their admiration of his illustrious docility. By the advice or commands of St Cyran, he accordingly, like his brothers, became one of the recluses of Port-Royal; and, like them, transferred to the support of the monastery all his worldly wealth. With them also he surrendered himself up to penitence, to solitude, and to silence; and in their company supplied his emaciated frame with food which rather mocked than satisfied its wants. Le Maitre thus describes one of the *petits soupers* of Port-Royal:—"It is, you know, but a slight repast which they serve up for us in the evening; but it engages my brother De Saci as completely as the most sumptuous meal. For my own part, such is the warmth of my temperament, the end of my good cheer follows so hard on its beginning, that I can hardly tell which is which. When all is over with me, and I have nothing left to do but to wash my hands, I see my brother De Saci, as composed and as serious as ever, take up his quarter of an apple, peel it deliberately, cut it up with precision, and swallow it at leisure. Before he begins, I have more than half done. When his little all is over, he rises from table as light as when he sat down, leaving untouched the greater part of what was set before him, and walks off as seriously as a man who had been doing great things, and who never fasted except on fast-days."

Poor Le Maitre! the gay spirit which had animated the palace

of justice had its transient flashes even in his "living tomb;" though the smile was in this case lighted up at an absurdity which had well nigh conducted his brother to that tomb where all life is extinct. Under these solemn parodies on what usually goes on at the dinner-table, De Saci pined away; and was rescued, not without extreme hazard, from the effects of his suicidal abstemiousness. He returned from the gates of death with a spirit unsubdued and undaunted; for it was animated by hopes and sustained by convictions which gave to that last enemy the aspect and the welcome of a friend. Admitted, in reluctant obedience to his confessor, to ordination as a priest, he assumed the office of director to the recluses of either sex at Port-Royal. Nature struggled in the bosom of Le Maitre against laying bare all the secrets of his soul to the inspection of his younger brother. But authority prevailed. Their mother led the way, by placing herself under the direction of her son. Blaise Pascal himself meekly took the law of his conscience from the same revered lips. Days of persecution followed, and De Saci was driven from his retreat, and confined for more than two years in the Bastille. There was fulfilled the prediction of St Cyran. Fontaine, the bosom friend of De Saci, was the associate of his prison hours. They were hours of suffering and of pain; but happier by far than the brightest and the most joyous passed by the revellers in the gay city beneath them.

In those hours, De Saci executed, and his friend transcribed, that translation of the Holy Scriptures which to this moment is regarded in France as the most perfect version in their own or in any other modern tongue. While yet under the charge of St Cyran, the study of the divine oracles was the ceaseless task of De Saci. In mature life, it had been his continual delight; in the absence of every other solace, it possessed his mind with all the energy of a master passion. Of the ten thousand chords which there blend together in sacred harmony, there was not one which did not awaken a responsive note in the heart of the aged prisoner. In a critical knowledge of the sacred text, he may have had many superiors, but none in that exquisite sensibility to the grandeur, the pathos, the superhuman wisdom, and the awful purity of the divine original, without which none can truly apprehend, or accurately render into another idiom, the sense of the inspired writers. Even the habitual prostration of his judgment to a human authority, believed to be divine, aided him as a translator: it forbade, indeed, the correction of errors, but it imparted freedom and confidence to the expression of all that he acknowledged as truth. Protestants may with justice except to many a passage of De Saci's translation; but

they will, we fear, search their own libraries in vain for any, where the author's unhesitating assurance of the real sense of controverted words permitted his style to flow with a similar absence of constraint, and an equal warmth and glow of diction.

Fontaine, the humble companion of his biblical labours, had also been one of the penitents of De Saci. He was a man of learning, and his "Mémoires sur MM. de Port-Royal," bespeak a nature gentle, affectionate, and devout. But to saturate his memory with the discourse of minds more exalted than his own, and to minister to them in collating or transcribing the books on which they were employed, limited his humble desires. He was successively the amanuensis of De Saci, and the secretary of the "great" Arnauld. A name so truly great, excepting that of Pascal, does not appear among the disciples of St Cyran, or the inmates of Port-Royal.

Antoine Arnauld was the youngest child of the parents of the Mère Angélique: he was consequently the uncle of Le Maître, De Sericourt, and De Saci. From his earliest years the reputation of his genius and learning had rendered him the object of universal notice and expectation. Richelieu himself is recorded to have stolen silently into his chamber, to enjoy the unpremeditated conversation of the young student. The Cardinal had no apparent reason to dread that in this case his advances would be repulsed; for Arnauld possessed several rich benefices, dressed in fashion, and even kept a carriage. But repulsed they were, and by the influence of the man to whom similar allurements had been presented in vain. In his dungeon at Vincennes, St Cyran received a visit from the young abbé. That almost magical influence was again exerted with irresistible power. Arnauld renounced his preferments, assumed the garb of penitence, and became the companion of his nephews, Le Maître and Sericourt, in their austere retirement. This abandonment of the world was not, however, so absolute, but that he still sought the rank of a *socius* or fellow of the Sorbonne. By the authority of Richelieu, his claims were rejected. But not even the Cardinal could obstruct the advancement of so eminent a scholar and divine to the dignity of a doctor in divinity. "To defend the truth, if necessary, to the death," was in those days one of the vows of such a graduate—vows, it is to be feared, as light as air with most men, but, in this instance, engraven as with a pen of iron on the soul of the new professor of theology.

A year had scarcely elapsed since he had received from the lips of his dying mother an adjuration to be faithful in the defence of truth at the expense, were it possible, of a thousand lives. Touched with the coincidence of his academical oath and of this maternal precept,

he thenceforward existed but to combat for what he at least esteemed the truth; and endured poverty, exile, and reproach, as he would have cheerfully submitted to death, in that sacred warfare. In controversy he found his vocation, his triumph, and perhaps his delight. The author of more than a hundred volumes, he was engaged in almost as many contests. His great work, *La fréquente Communion*, is essentially controversial. He warred with the Jesuits as a body; and with several of their most eminent writers, as Sirmond, Nouet, and De Bonis, he carried on separate debates. Apologies for St Cyran, Jansenius, and for the ladies of Port-Royal flowed copiously from his ever-ready pen. He assailed the metaphysical meditations of Des Cartes, and Malebranche's theory of miracles. He contended even with his friend and associate, Nicole, on an attempt to apply certain geometrical principles to the solution of some problems in divinity. Claude, Maimbourg, and Annat were among his adversaries. The mere list of his works occupies twenty-six closely-printed octavo pages. A rapid analysis of them fills a large volume. If that compilation may be trusted (he would be a bold man who should undertake to verify it), the vast collection of books which bear the name of Antoine Arnauld scarcely contain a tract, except those on mathematics, in which he is not engaged in the theological or scientific strife with some antagonist.

In the catalogue, of course, appears the celebrated treatise *De la Perpétuité de la Foi sur l'Eucharistie*, a work rewarded with higher applause than any other of his avowed writings. Twenty-seven Bishops and twenty Doctors prefaced it with eulogies on the learning, piety, talents, and orthodoxy of the illustrious author. He dedicated it to Clement IX., and was repaid with the most glowing compliments. Perhaps a still more gratifying tribute to his success was the conversion to the Roman Catholic faith of Turenne, of which this book was the occasion; and yet nothing is more certain than that the real author was not Arnauld, but Nicole. In the title-page of a book, designed to refute the formidable Claude, the two friends judged the name of a Doctor of the Church would avail more than that of a simple *tonsuré*—on the side of Arnauld a literary and pious fraud, which it is impossible to excuse; and, on the side of Nicole, an example of zeal for a man's cause triumphing over his love of fame, to which it would not be easy to find a parallel. Such, however, was the height of Arnauld's reputation, and such the affluence of his mind, that it is scarcely reasonable to attribute this disingenuous proceeding to selfish motives. Few men have been more enamoured of the employments, or less covetous of the rewards, of a literary life. For nearly threescore years he lived

pen in hand, except when engaged in devotion, or in celebrating the offices of the church of Port-Royal on occasions of peculiar dignity. His was one of those rare natures to which intellectual exertion brings relief rather than lassitude; thus giving to feebleness understandings the assurance that the living spirit which is in man, if disunited from the burdens of mortality, would be capable of efforts commensurate with an immortal existence.

His book, *De la fréquente Communion*, was the commencement of the seventy years' religious war which ended in the destruction of Port-Royal. To restore the severe maxims of Christian antiquity respecting the spiritual qualification of communicants, and thus to raise a standard of Church membership, incomparably more exalted than that which prevailed in his own generation, was the avowed object of Arnauld. His scarcely concealed purpose was to chastise the lax morality to which the Jesuits had lent their sanction; and to repel their attacks on the more rigid system of St Cyran. Revised in his prison by that father of the faithful, and sheltered by the commendation of divines of every rank and order, the book—f forbearing in style, lofty in sentiment, replete with various learning, and breathing an eloquence at once animated by unhesitating faith, and chastened by the most profound humility—broke like a peal of thunder over the heads of his startled antagonists. Such was the fury of their resentment, that the Marshal de Vihé sagaciously observed, "There must be some secret in all this. The Jesuits are never so excited when nothing but the glory of God is at stake." Though at first struck down by the censures of a conclave of Bishops, with Mazarin at their head, Nouet, the great advocate of the society, returned again and again to the assault. Pulpits fulminated, presses groaned. On the one side, the Sorbonne invoked the aid of the civil power, then in feeble hands; on the other, the Jesuits appealed to the Papal See, then rising in new vigour from the disasters of the preceding century. Arnauld was cited by the Pope, and required by the Cardinal Minister of France to appear in his own defence at Rome. Against this infringement of the Gallican liberties, the University, the Sorbonne, and the Parliament of Paris remonstrated; but Mazarin was inflexible.

The Holy See took cognisance of the cause, though the person of the accused was beyond their reach. In his absence, that infallible tribunal decided not to let the world know whether, of the thirty erroneous opinions imputed to Arnauld as heresies, twenty and nine were heretical or not. Arnauld himself, however, was unable to stand his ground. For twenty-five years together, he was compelled to live in a voluntary concealment, which his enemies had not the

power nor perhaps the wish, to violate. His retirement was passed in the monastery of Port-Royal, or in one of the adjacent hermitages.

That ancient seat of their Order had now been long deserted by his sister Angelique and her associates. Their residence at Paris had not been unfruitful of events. They had exchanged the jurisdiction of the General of their Order for that of the Archbishop of Paris. On the voluntary resignation of Angelique, and by her desire, the abbatial dignity had been made elective in their house. An ineffectual scheme of devoting themselves to the perpetual adoration of the Holy Eucharist, had deeply exercised their thoughts. Occasional miracles had awakened or rewarded their piety. An inspired litany (so it was believed) had fallen insensibly from the pen of sister Agnes, which eight Doctors censured, St Cyran vindicated, and the Pope suppressed. From his prison at Vincennes, their great apologist directed their consciences, and guided them to the office of educating children of their own sex—a wise and happy project, which brought back into the sphere of ordinary duties, minds soaring with indefinite aims into the regions of mysticism, and wasting, in efforts for an ideal perfection, talents eminently fitted to bless and to improve mankind.

To restore the sisterhood to the quiet valley where their predecessors had worshipped, was the next care of St Cyran. True, it threatened their lives; but “is it not,” he asked, “as well to serve God in an hospital as in a church, if such be his pleasure?” “Are any prayers more acceptable than those of the afflicted?” Angelique’s heart had a ready answer to such questions from such an inquirer. In that sequestered church where angels, and a still more awful presence, had once dwelt, they could not but still abide (such was his assurance), and she returned to seek them there. She came attended by a large proportion of the ladies of Port-Royal, hailed by the poor and aged, whom in former times she had cherished, and welcomed by her kinsmen and by the companions of their religious solitude. It was their first and only meeting. Les Granges (a farm-house on the hill-side) became the residence of the recluses, the gates of the monastery closing on the nuns.

Bound by no monastic vows, the men addressed themselves to such employments as each was supposed best qualified to fill. Schools for the instruction of youth in every branch of literature and science were kept by Lancelot, Nicole, Fontaine, and De Saci. Some laboured at translations of the Fathers, and other works of piety. Arnauld plied his ceaseless toils in logic, geometry, meta-

physics, and theological debate. Physicians of high celebrity exercised their art in all the neighbouring villages. Le Maitre and other eminent lawyers addressed themselves to the work of arbitrating in all the dissensions of the vicinage. There were to be seen gentlemen working assiduously as vine-dressers, officers making shoes, noblemen sawing timber and repairing windows; a society held together by no vows, governed by no corporate laws, subject to no common superior, pursuing no joint designs, yet all living in unbroken harmony; all following their respective callings silent, grave, abstracted, self-afflicted by fastings, watchings, and humiliations—a body of penitents on their painful progress through a world which they had resolved at once to serve and to avoid. From year to year, till death or persecution removed them from the valley of Port-Royal, the members of this singular association adhered pertinaciously to their design; nor among their annals will be found more, we think, than a single name on which rests the imputation or infidelity of fickleness of purpose.

To the nuns, indeed, no such change was possible. Like the inhabitants of Les Granges, they employed themselves in educating the children of the rich and the poor, in almsgiving, and in other works of mercy. Their renunciation of secular cares was combined (no common alliance) with an entire superiority to all secular interests. Angelique, now the elected abbess, and in that character the ruler of the temporalities of the convent, exhibited a princely spirit of munificence—nourished and sustained by the most severe and self-denying economy. She and her sisterhood reserved for themselves little more than a place in their own list of paupers. So firm was her reliance on the Divine bounty, and so abstemious her use of it, that she hazarded a long course of heroic improvidence, justified by the event and ennobled by the motive; but at once fitted and designed rather to excite the enthusiasm of ordinary mortals, than to afford a model for their imitation. Buildings were erected both at Port-Royal de Paris, and Port-Royal des Champs; in the serene majesty of which the worshipper might discern an appropriate vestibule to the temple made without hands, towards which his adoration was directed. Wealth was never permitted to introduce, nor poverty to exclude, any candidate for admission as a novice or a pupil. On one occasion twenty thousand francs were given as a relief to a distressed community; on another, four times that sum were restored to a benefactress, whose heart repented a bounty which she had no longer the right to reclaim. Their regular expenditure exceeded by more than sevenfold their certain income; nor

were they ever disappointed in their assurance, that the annual deficiency of more than forty thousand francs would be supplied by the benevolence of their fellow-Christians.

What was the constraining force of charity, Angelique had learned from the study of her own heart, and she relied with a well-founded confidence in the same generous impulse in the hearts of others. The grace, the gaiety, and tenderness of her nature, which might have embellished courts and palaces, were drawn into continual exercise to mitigate the anguish of disease, to soothe the wretched, and to instruct the young. Her hands ministered, by day and by night, to the relief of those whose maladies were the most loathsome or contagious, and her voice, in its most kindly tones, allayed their terrors. With playful ingenuity she would teach her associates how to employ the vestments, the furniture, and, when other resources failed, even the sacred plate, of the monastery, in providing clothes for the naked, though it left themselves in want, and in feeding the hungry, though it deprived themselves of all present resources. While thus distributing bounties, not merely to the necessities of the indigent, but to the relief of persons of her own rank in life, there was in the bosom of Angelique a feeling which revolted, not against dependence on alms, for her vows of poverty required it, but against soliciting aid even from her nearest kindred ;—a feeling condemned as human, perhaps, in her stern self-judgment, but assuredly one of those emotions which the best of our race are the last to relinquish. And if it be true, as true it surely is, that to the culture and exercise of the benevolent affections as an ultimate end, all other ends of human life—knowledge, practical skill, meditative power, self-control, and the rest—are but subervient means, who shall deny to such a course of life as that of the nuns of Port-Royal, the praise of wisdom, however ill he may judge of the wisdom which established and maintained conventual institutions? Some affections, indeed, they could not cultivate. Two of the deepest and the richest mines of their nature, maternal and conjugal love, lay unwrought and unexplored. Yet they lived, as wisdom we are told ought to live, with children round their knees ; training them for every office in life, if not with a mother's yearnings, with perhaps something more than a mother's prudence.

Over this singular theocracy, male and female, presided St Cyran, exercising from his dungeon a supreme authority ; and under him ruled Antoine Singlin, the general confessor both of the recluses and the nuns. In the conduct of souls (such is the appropriate style) Singlin was supposed to excel all the professors of that most critical science. Pascal, De Saci, and Arnauld sat at his feet with

childlike docility. Ministers of state, advocates, and bishops, crowded everently round his pulpit; yet by the confession, or rather the boast, of his disciples, he was distinguished neither by learning, talents, nor eloquence. The mystery of his absolute dominion over intellects so incomparably superior to his own, is partly, at least, dispelled by what remains of his writings. They indicate a mind at once discriminating and devout, conversant alike with human nature and with the Divine, exerting all its powers to penetrate the labyrinth of man's heart, and sustaining these powers by habitual communion with the source of wisdom.

Guided by such pastors, the Port-Royalists were following out a progress more tranquil than that of John Bunyan's Pilgrim, when the wars of the Fronde rudely scattered the shepherd and the flock. Most of the nuns fled for refuge to Paris, but the recluses (they were Frenchmen still) appeared three hundred strong, in defence of their sequestered valley. Above their hair-shirts glittered coats of mail. As the last notes of the anthem died away, the trumpet summoned the worshippers to military exercises. Spears and helmets flashed through the woods—plumes waved over many a furrowed brow—intrenchments, the course of which may still be traced, were thrown up; and the evening-gun, the watch-word, and the heavy tread of cavalry, broke a silence till then undisturbed, except by the monastic choir, or the half-uttered prayer of some lonely penitent. De Sericourt felt once again his pulse beat high as he drew out the martial column, and raised the long-forgotten words of peremptory command. But ere long a voice more subdued, though not less peremptory, was heard to silence his. De Saci's heart mourned over this reliance on an arm of flesh. Watching the first pause in the new enthusiasm of his associates, he implored them to lay aside their weapons; and in long-suffering to submit themselves and their cause to the Supreme Disposer of events. At an instant the whole aspect of Port-Royal was changed. Students returned to their books, penitents to their cells, and handicraftsmen to their ordinary labours. It was a change as sudden and as complete as when, at the bidding of the Genius, the crowded bridge and the rushing river disappeared from the eyes of Mirza, leaving before him nothing but the long hollow Valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing on the sides of it.

To one inmate of Port-Royal the terrors of an impending war had brought no disquietude. Angelique remained there, the guardian angel of the place. Hundreds of ruined peasants were daily fed by her bounty. "Perhaps I shall not be able" (the quotation is from one of her letters written at the time) "to send

you a letter to-morrow, for all our horses and asses are dead with hunger. Oh! how little do princes know the detailed horrors of war. All the provender of the beasts we have been obliged to divide between ourselves and the starving poor. We have concealed as many of the peasants and of their cattle as we could, in our monastery, to save them from being murdered and losing all their substance. Our dormitory and the chapter-house are full of horses; we are almost stifled by being pent up with these beasts, but we could not resist the piercing lamentations of the starving and the heart-broken poor. In the cellar we have concealed forty cows. Our court-yards and out-houses are stuffed full of fowls, turkeys, ducks, geese, and asses. The church is piled up to the ceiling with corn, oats, beans, and peas, and with caldrons, kettles, and other things belonging to the cottagers. Our laundry is filled by the aged, the blind, the maimed, the halt, and infants. The infirmary is full of sick and wounded. We have torn up all our rags and linen clothing to dress their sores; we have no more, and are now at our wits' end. We dare not go into the fields for any more, as they are full of marauding parties. We hear that the abbey of St Cyran has been burned and pillaged. Our own is threatened with an attack every day. The cold weather alone preserves us from pestilence. We are so closely crowded that death happens continually. God, however, is with us, and we are at peace."

That inward peace which Angelique was thus enabled to maintain during the horrors of civil war, was soon to be exposed to a more arduous trial. To the baffled antagonists of Arnauld, Port-Royal was an abomination. There dwelt in safety their intended victim, plying his dreaded pen, surrounded by his kindred, his scholars, and his allies; and all engaged in the same contest with the casuistry, the theology, and the morals of the society of Jesus. Against these devoted enemies one Brisacier, a Jesuit, led the assault. His articles of impeachment bore that they despised the Eucharist, that they had neither holy water nor images in their churches, and that they prayed neither to the Virgin nor the saints. Vain was the clearest refutation of calumnies so shocking to Catholic ears, and vain the archiepiscopal thunders which rebuked the slanderer. Father Megnier, of the same holy company, denounced to the astonished world a secret conspiracy against the religion of Christ, the leaders of which were the Abbot of St Cyran and Antoine Arnauld—the Voltaire and the Diderot of their age! But human credulity has its limits, and Megnier had overstepped them. For a moment the assailants paused; but at last, the womb of time, fertile in prodigies, gave birth to the far-famed "five propositions" of

Father Coruet—a “palpable obscure,” lying in the dim regions of psychological divinity, and doomed for successive generations to perplex, to exasperate, and to overwhelm with persecution, or with ridicule, no inconsiderable part of the Christian world.

That these five dogmas on the mystery of the Divine grace were to be found within the *Augustinus* of Jansenius, was *not* the original charge. They were at first denounced by Coruet as opinions which had been derived from the work of the Bishop of Ypres, by Arnauld and other Doctors of the Gallican Church, and by them inculcated on their own disciples. Innocent X. condemned the propositions as heretical; and to the authority of the Holy See Arnauld and his friends implicitly bowed. In a woodcut prefixed to this Papal constitution by the triumphant Jesuits, Jansenius appeared in his episcopal dress, but accoutred with the aspect, the wings, and the other well-known appendages of the evil spirit, around whom were playing the lightnings of the Vatican.

The man and the heresy thus happily disposed of, a single question remained—Were the peccant propositions really to be found in the *Augustinus* or not? Arnauld declared that he had studied the book from end to end, and could not find them there. That there they were nevertheless to be found, the Jesuits as strongly asserted. To have quoted by chapter and page the offensive passages, would have spoiled the most promising quarrel which had arisen in the Church since the close of the Tridentine Council. Still-born must then have perished the ever-memorable distinction of the *droit* and the *fait*—the *droit* being the justice of the Papal censure of the propositions, which all Catholics admitted—the *fait* being the existence, in the *Augustinus*, of the propositions so censured, which all Jansenists denied.

The vulgar mode of trial by quotation being discarded, nothing remained but trial by authority. Annat, the King's Confessor, a Jesuit in religion, and Mazarin, the King's Minister, a Jesuit in politics, each, from different motives, found his account in humiliating the Port-Royalists. A conclave of Parisian Doctors, selected by them, decreed that the five propositions were in the book, and should be in the book. A papal bull affirmed their sentence, and then a second conclave required all the ecclesiastics, and all the religious communities of France, to subscribe their assent to the order which had thus affiliated these foundling opinions on poor Jansenius. That such a defender of the faith as Antoine Arnauld would receive such a mandate in silence, the authors of it neither expected nor desired. In words exactly transcribed, though not avowedly quoted, from Chrysostom and Augustine, he drew up his own

creed on the questions of grace and free-will ; and in good round terms acquitted the Bishop of Ypres of having written more or less. A third conclave censured the apologist, unconscious apparently that their fulminations would reach the holy fathers of Constantinople and Hippo. They at least reached the object at which they in reality aimed. "Could the most Christian King," they exclaimed, "permit that penitent recluses and young children should any longer assemble for instruction under the influence of a man who had been convicted of heresy on the subject of efficacious grace, and who was either unable or unwilling to find in the *Augustinus* what the Pope himself had said might be found there?" Anne of Austria listened, Mazarin whispered, and she obeyed. Armed with her authority, her lieutenants appeared at Port-Royal with orders to restore Les Granges and the forests around it to their ancient solitude ; and then had for ever fallen the glories of that sacred valley, but for an incident so strange and opportune as to force back the memory to the precipitate descent from Mount Ida of the Homeric Deities, to rescue, in the agony of his fate, some panting hero on the field of Troy.

Mademoiselle Perrier was the niece of Blaise Pascal. She was a child in her eleventh year, and a scholar residing in the monastery of Port-Royal. For three years and a half she had been afflicted with a *fistula lacrymalis*. The adjacent bones had become carious, and the most loathsome ulcers disfigured her countenance. All remedies had been tried in vain ; the medical faculty had exhausted their resources. One desperate experiment remained—it was that of the actual cautery. For this the day was appointed, and her father had set out on a journey to be present at the operation. Now it came to pass that M. de la Potherie, who was at once a Parisian ecclesiastic, a great-uncle of Angelique and of Arnauld, and an assiduous collector of relics, had possessed himself of one of the thorns composing the crown of which we read in the Evangelists. Great had been the curiosity of the various convents to see it, and the ladies of Port-Royal had earnestly solicited that privilege. Accordingly, on the 24th of March, in the year 1656, the day of the week being Friday, and the week the third in Lent, a solemn procession of nuns, novices, and scholars, moved along the choir of the monastic church, chanting appropriate hymns, and each one, in her turn, kissing the holy relic. When the turn of Mademoiselle Perrier arrived, she, by the advice of the schoolmistress, touched her diseased eye with the thorn, not doubting that it would effect a cure. She regained her room, and the malady was gone ! The cure was instantaneous and complete. So strict, however, was the silence of the

abbey, especially in Lent, that, except to the companion who shared her chamber, Mademoiselle Perrier did not at first divulge the miracle. On the following day the surgeon appeared with his instruments. The afflicted father was present ; exhortations to patience were delivered ; every preparation was complete, when the astonished operator for the first time perceived that every symptom of the disease had disappeared. All Paris rang with the story. It reached the ear of the queen-mother. By her command, M. Felix, the principal surgeon to the king, investigated and confirmed the narrative. The royal conscience was touched. Who but must be moved with such an attestation from on high, of the innocence of a monastery divinely selected as the theatre of so great a miracle ? Anne of Austria recalled her lieutenant. Again the recluses returned to their hermitages ; the busy hum of school-boys was heard once more at Port-Royal ; and in his ancient retreat Arnauld was permitted to resume his unremitting labours.

Time must be at some discount with any man who should employ it in adjusting the "balance of improbabilities" in such a case as this. But there is one indisputable marvel connected with it. The greatest genius, the most profound scholar, and the most eminent advocate of that age, all possessing the most ample means of knowledge, all carefully investigated, all admitted, and all defended with their pens, the miracle of the Holy Thorn. Europe at that time produced no three men more profoundly conversant with the laws of the material world, with the laws of the human mind, and with the municipal law, than Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre ; and they were all sincere and earnest believers. Yet our Protestant incredulity utterly rejects both the tale itself and the inferences drawn from it, and but for such mighty names, might yield to the temptation of regarding it as too contemptible for serious notice. Why is this ? It is a question which volumes might be well employed to answer. In this place, a passing notice is all that can be given to it.

Antecedently to their investigation of the evidence, Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre may be supposed to have reduced their reasonings on the subject to the following syllogism :—The true Church is distinguished from all others by the perennial possession of miraculous gifts. But the Church of Rome is the true Church. Therefore, when a miracle is alleged to have happened within her fold, the presumption is not against, but in favour of the truth of the statement ; and therefore, aided by that presumption, credit is due in such a case to testimony which would be insufficient to substantiate the fact under any other circumstances. *Negamus majorem*. It is not in the spirit of paradox, far less in that of irreverence or levity, that we would

maintain the reverse—namely, that a Church really distinguished by the permanent exercise of miraculous powers, would presumably be *not* a true Church, but a false.

Probability is the expectation of the recurrence of usual sequences. Certainty is the expectation of the recurrence of sequences believed to be invariable. The disappointment of such an expectation may be the disclosure of some uniform sequence hitherto unknown; that is, one of the laws of nature; or it may be a mistake; that is, the disturbance of those laws by some power capable of controlling them. He who alleges a miracle alleges the existence of natural laws; for there can be no exception where there is no rule. Now, to ascribe the laws of nature to any power but that of God, would be atheism. But to ascribe an *habitual* infringement of these laws to powers subordinate, yet opposed, to the divine, is not atheistic, but is, on the contrary, consistent alike with piety and with reason.

That analogies of natural and revealed religion not only permit, but require, us thus to judge. For example, the moral law of God is love. That law is habitually infringed by human selfishness. Submission to the legitimate exercise of legitimate authority, is a law from Heaven. That law is habitually infringed by human self-will. That within the range of his powers of action man should be a free agent, is the divine law. That law, as we learn from the Gospels, was habitually infringed in the case of demoniacs.

That the blood of the dead should corrupt and not liquefy; that houses should be built and not fly; that diseases should be cured by therapeutics, or not at all, are all physical laws of nature—that is, of God. Those physical laws, we are told, are habitually infringed within the fold of the Roman Catholic Church. Be it so. But if so, what is the inference? That the Roman Catholic Church is the depository of divine truth, and the special object of divine favour?—We wot not. Where such truth resides, and such favour rests, there will be harmony, not elsewhere to be found, with the general laws of the divine economy, and the general principles of the divine government. The law is higher than the anomaly. The rule is more worthy than the exception. That conformity to the eternal ordinances of Heaven, whether psychological or physical, should indicate the possession of truth and holiness in a Church, is intelligible. That a systematic counteraction of any such ordinances should indicate the same, is not intelligible. If in any society any law of the divine government, whether moral or physical, is *habitually* reversed, the inference would seem to be, that such a society is subject to the control of some power opposed to the divine.

Will it be answered that *every* disturbance of the laws of God must proceed from the Author of those laws, and attest his agency and approbation? Why so? His moral laws are violated every instant by rebel man: why not his physical laws by rebel angels? Moses and Paul, and that divine teacher to whom Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre bowed their hearts, and desired to bow their understandings, all assure us that this is no impossible supposition. Or will it be answered that such reasonings impugn the miracles of Christ himself? If so, we abandon them as fallacious; for, sooner should our right hand forget its cunning, than be employed to write one word having that tendency. But the cases are utterly dissimilar. Assume the reality both of the series of miracles recorded in the Gospels, and of the series of miracles recorded in the Roman Catholic legends, and without any inconsistency we may regard the one as stamped with the seal of truth, and the other as bearing the impress of error. Our Redeemer's miracles blend in perfect harmony, though not in absolute unison, with those laws, physical and moral, which he established in the creation, and fulfilled in the redemption, of the world. In their occasion—in their object—in their fulfilment of prophecy—in their attendant doctrine—and in their exceptional character, they are essentially distinguished from the perennial miracles of Rome. These are at absolute discord with the laws which the miracles of Christ fulfil. If compelled to believe them true, we should not be compelled to refer them to a divine original. But that the truth of such stories as that of the Holy Thorn should ever have commanded the assent of such men as Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre, is, after all, a standing wonder, and can be accounted for only by remembering that they assumed as inevitable, and hailed as invaluable, an inference which, as it seems to us, is not to be drawn from the premises, even if established.

Judge as we may of the miraculous attestation to the innocence of Port-Royal, which thus obtained the advocacy of Pascal, sentence is irreversibly passed by mankind on the prodigies wrought, at the same time and in the same cause, by the pen of that wonder-working controversialist. In the whole compass of literature, ancient and modern, there is probably nothing in the same style which could bear a comparison with the "Provincial Letters." Their peculiar excellence can be illustrated only by the force of contrast; and, in that sense, the "Letters of Junius" may afford the illustration.

To either series of anonymous satires must be ascribed the praise of exquisite address, and of irresistible vigour. Each attained an immediate and a lasting popularity; and each has exercised a power-

ful influence on the literature of succeeding times. But here all resemblance ends. No writer ever earned so much fame as Junius with so little claim to the respect or gratitude of his readers. He embraced no large principles; he awakened no generous feelings; he scarcely advocated any great social interest. He gives equally little proof of the love of man, and of the love of books. He contributed nothing to the increase of knowledge, and but seldom ministered to blameless delight. His topics and his thoughts were all of the passing day. His invective is merciless and extravagant; and the veil of public spirit is barely thrown over his personal antipathies and inordinate self-esteem. No man was ever so greatly indebted to mere style; yet, with all its recommendations, his is a style eminently vicious. It is laboured, pompous, antithetical—never self-forgetful, never flowing freely, never in repose. The admiration he extorts is yielded grudgingly; nor is there any book so universally read which might become extinct with so little loss to the world as “The Letters of Junius.”

Reverse all this, and you have the characteristics of the “Provincial Letters.” Their language is but the transparent, elastic, unobtrusive medium of thought. It moves with such quiet gracefulness as entirely to escape attention, until the matchless perspicacity of discussions, so incomprehensible under any management but his, forces on the mind an inquiry into the causes of so welcome a phenomenon. Pascal’s wit, even when most formidable, is so tempered by kindness, as to show that the infliction of pain, however salutary, was a reluctant tribute to his supreme love of truth. His playfulness is the buoyancy of a heart which has no burden to throw off, and is gay without an effort. His indignation is never morose, vindictive, or supercilious: it is but philanthropy kindling into righteous anger and generous resentment, and imparting to them a tone of awful majesty. The unostentatious master of all learning, he finds recreation in toils which would paralyse an ordinary understanding; yet so sublimated is that learning with the spirit of philosophy, as to make him heedless of whatever is trivial, transient, and minute, except as it suggests or leads to what is comprehensive and eternal.

But the canons of mere literary criticism were never designed to measure that which constitutes the peculiar greatness of the author of the “Provincial Letters.” His own claim was to be tried by his peers—by those who, in common with him, possess a mental vision purified by contemplating that light in which is no darkness at all, and affections enlarged by a benevolence which, having its springs in heaven, has no limits to its diffusion on earth. Among

his ascetic brethren in the valley of Port-Royal, he himself recognised the meet, if not the impartial, judges of his labours. They hailed with transport an ally who, to their own sanctity of manners and to more than their own genius, added popular arts to which they could make no pretensions. We infer indeed, though doubtfully, that they were taught by the excellent M. Singlin to regard and censure such exultation as merely human. That great spiritual anatomist probably rebuked and punished the glee which could not but agitate the innermost folds of Arnauld's heart, as he read his apologist's exquisite analysis of the *Pouvoir Prochain* and of the *Graces Suffisantes qui ne sont pas efficaces*. For history records the misgivings of Mademoiselle Pascal on the question, whether M. Singlin would put up with the indomitable gaiety which would still chequer with some gleams of mirth her brother's cell at Les Granges, even after his preternatural ingenuity had been exhausted in rendering it the most desolate and cheerless of human abodes.

Whatever may have been his treatment of his illustrious penitents, the good man was not permitted to guide them through their weary pilgrimage. The respite obtained for Port-Royal by the Holy Thorn and the "Provincial Letters," expired with the death of Mazarin, and with the authority of the Queen-mother. Louis began, as he believed, to act for himself—a vain attempt for a man who could never think for himself. The genius, such as it was, of the dead minister, had still the mastery over the inferior mind of the surviving monarch. Louis had been taught by the Cardinal to fear and to hate De Retz, Jansenism, and Port-Royal. Poor Singlin was therefore driven away, and in due time consigned to the Bastille. At the bidding of the King, a synod of the clergy of France drew up an anti-Jansenist test, to be taken by all ecclesiastics, and by all religious communities, male and female; fortified, of course, by effective penalties. They were all required to subscribe their names to a declaration that the "five propositions," in their heretical sense, were to be found in the *Augustinus*; nor was there any exception in favour of those who had never seen the book, or of those who could not read Latin. This was no ineffectual menace. Blow after blow fell on those who refused, and even on those who were expected to refuse, thus to condemn the Bishop of Ypres. Port-Royal was foremost among such obdurate recusants. Their schools, male and female, were dispersed. Arnauld and the other recluses were banished from the valley. The admission of novices and postulantes was interdicted to the abbess; and her ancient monastery was threatened with suppression as contumacious and heretical.

Angelique Arnauld was now sinking under the pressure of in-

firmity and of old age. Half a century had elapsed since the commencement of her reforms, and her tale of threescore years and ten had been fully told ; but, ere she yielded her soul to Him who gave it, she rose from her dying-bed to make one more effort for the preservation of the house so long devoted, under her guidance, to works of mercy and to exercises of penitence and prayer. Surrounded by a throng of weeping children, and by her elder associates maintaining their wonted composure, she, for the last time, quitted Port-Royal des Champs, giving and receiving benedictions, and went to die at the convent of Port-Royal de Paris.

She found the gates guarded, and the court-yards filled by a troop of archers, the executioners of the royal mandate for expelling the scholars, novices, postulantes, and other unprofessed inmates of the house. During eight successive days one after another of these helpless women was torn from the place around which their affections had twined ; and from the arms of the dying mother, whom they loved with the tenderness of children, and regarded with more than filial reverence. Seventy-five persons were thus successively separated from her, as from hour to hour she descended to the tomb, under bodily and mental sufferings, described with fearful minuteness in the obituaries of Port-Royal. "At length our good Lord has seen fit to deprive us of all. Fathers, sisters, disciples, children—all are gone. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Such was her announcement to Madame de Sevigné of the emptying of this first vial of kingly wrath. To the Queen-mother she addressed herself in a loftier, though not in a less gentle tone. At each momentary remission of her agonies, she dictated to Anne of Austria a letter, long and justly celebrated as a model of epistolary eloquence. It has no trace of debility, still less of resentment. Her defence is as clear and as collected as though, in the fulness of health, she had been conducting the cause of another. Without a reproach or a murmur, she exposes the wrongs of her sisterhood, and the error of her persecutors. For herself she asks no sympathy ; but, from the verge of the world she had so long renounced, and was now about to quit for ever, she invokes from the depositaries of worldly power the justice they owed to man, and the submission due to the ordinances of Heaven. "Now, my earthly business is done !" was her grateful exclamation as this letter was closed ; and then commenced a mental and bodily strife, recorded, perhaps, but too faithfully by her biographers. These pages, at least, are no fit place for the delineation of a scene over which the sternest spectator must have wept, and the most hardened must have prayed fervently for the sufferer and for himself. From the dark close of a life so

holy and so blameless, and from the hope, and peace, and joy, which at length cast over her departing spirit some radiance from that better state on the confines of which she stood, lessons may be drawn which we have no commission to teach, and which are perhaps best learned without the intervention of any human teacher. Yet, even in Port-Royal itself, there were not wanting some to whom this admonition of the vanity of human things was addressed in vain.

Among that venerable society, the Sœur Flavie Passart was unrivalled in the severity of her self-discipline, and the splendour of her superhuman gifts. As often as illness confined her to her bed, so often did a miracle restore her. The dead returned to her with messages from the other world. No saint in the calendar withheld his powerful influence in the court of heaven when she invoked it. Like many wiser folks, Sœur Flavie discovered at last, and doubtless to her own surprise, that she had become (there are none but masculine terms to express it) a liar and a knave. The same discovery was opportunely made by her associates, and arrested her progress to the elective dignities of the abbey. A penitent confession of her Jansenist errors, a denunciation of the more eminent ladies of Port-Royal as her seducers, and a retraction of her heretical belief in the innocence of Jansenius, might, however, still pave her way to the abbatial throne. So judged the Sœur Flavie, and so decided M. Perifixe, the then Archbishop of Paris. She merely asked the imprisonment of twenty-six of her rivals. He cheerfully accorded so reasonable a boon. Repairing in pontifical state to the Parisian monastery, he again tendered the anti-Jansenist test. Angélique was gone; but her spirit and her constancy survived. The simple-hearted nuns thought that it would be a mere falsehood to attest the existence of "five propositions" in a book which they had never seen, and could not read; and truth, they knew, was the command of God, let Pope, Cardinal, or Archbishop say what they would to the contrary. Perifixe interdicted their admission to the holy sacrament. "Well, my lord," they replied, "there is in heaven a Judge who reads the heart, and to him we commend our cause." "Ay, ay," rejoined the exemplary prelate, "when we get to heaven it will be time enough to consider that, and see how things go there."

Eight days elapsed; and still no change of purpose, no subscription to the test. Preceded by his crosier, the mitre on his brows, his train borne by ecclesiastics, and followed by a long line of archers, the Archbishop reappeared. Much he discoursed respecting his own mildness, and much of the obduracy of the nuns. In

proof of both, twenty-three of their number were conveyed to separate places of confinement. But the fruits of her treachery were not reaped by the Sœur Flavie. By the influence of the Archbishop, the Sœur Dorothée Perdreau was elected abbess. That lady established her residence at Paris. She effected a final separation of the two monasteries; and gave entertainments at the Parisian convent which might vie with the most brilliant of any which formed the boast of the neighbouring hotels. For ten months her exiled sisters remained in prison. Perifixe then ordered their return to Port-Royal des Champs, there to be excluded from the sacraments of the Church, and to die without her benedictions. The recluses of the valley were to be seen there no more. They lived in hiding-places, or pined away in dungeons. Singlin died of extremity of suffering in the Bastille. It must be admitted, therefore, that if the existence of the "five propositions" in the *Augustinus* was not verified by the attestation of a score or two of old ladies, Louis and his clergy have not to bear the responsibility of so great a misfortune to the Church.

Twelve years before, the miracle of the Holy Thorn and the genius of Pascal had rescued Port-Royal from impending destruction. A person scarcely less unlike the common herd of mortals than the author of the "Provincial Letters," and whose elevation had been owing to events which some may think more miraculous than the cure of Pascal's niece, now interposed in their behalf, and with not inferior success.

Anne Geneviève de Bourbon was born in the year 1619, in the castle of Vincennes, where her father, Henry, Prince of Orleans, was then confined. The misfortunes of her family, and especially the execution of the Constable Montmorency, her maternal uncle, had predisposed, in early youth, to serious thought, a mind distinguished to the last by an insatiable craving for strong emotions. To renounce the world, and to take the veil among the sisterhood of Carmelites of the Faubourg St Jacques, were the earliest of the projects she had formed to baffle the foul fiend ennui. A counter-project, devised by her mother, was, that the young princess should present herself at a court ball. Maternal authority, perhaps inclination, on the one side, and conscientious scruples on the other, balanced and distressed the spirit of the high-born maiden. She betook herself for guidance to the Faubourg St Jacques. A council on the arduous question was held with all the forms, conventual and theatrical, which the statutes of the Order and the fancy of the nuns required or suggested. As presidents, sat two of their number, one impersonating the grace of Penitence, the other the virtue of

Discretion. From the judgment-seat so occupied, went forth the sentence that Anne Geneviève de Bourbon should attend the ball, and should surrender herself "de bonne foi" to all the dress and ornaments prepared for her; but that in immediate contact with her person she should be armed with the penitential robe of hair-cloth commonly called a *cilice*. Above the talisman which thus encircled that young and lovely form, glowed the bright panoply of the *marchande de modes*. Beneath it throbbed a heart responsive in every pulse to the new intoxication. Penitence and Discretion took their flight, no more to return till, after the lapse of many a chequered year, the *cilice* was again drawn over a heart, then, alas! aching with remorse, and bowed down with the contrite retrospect of many a crime and many a folly.

At the Hôtel de Rambouillet, she was initiated, with her brother, afterwards "the great Condé," into the Parisian mystery of throwing over the cold hard lineaments of downright selfishness the fine woven draperies of polite literature, of sentimentality, and of taste. She had scarcely read any books; but she could discourse eloquently on all. Mistress of the histrionic art, all words fell bewitchingly from a voice with which every look, and gesture, and attitude combined in graceful harmony. De Retz notices the exquisite effect of the sudden bursts of gaiety which would at times dispel her habitual, but not inexpressive, languor. Sarazin and Voiture were proud to receive their laurels from her hand, or to beg them at her feet. Statesmen and generals sought, or seemed to seek, her counsels. Even her mitred correspondents infused into their pastoral admonitions a delicacy and a glow of language, which reveal alike her skill to fascinate, and their desire to please. Vows of celibacy no longer promised an escape from lassitude. At the age of twenty-three she gave her hand to Henri d'Orléans, Duc de Longueville, who had already numbered forty-seven years. The Duke repaired as plenipotentiary to the conferences at Munster. The Duchess remained at Paris, the idol of the court. Unexplored, at least by us, be the scandalous chronicle of a scandalous age. She rejoined him in time to shelter, if not entirely to save, her reputation.

As she floated down the Meuse in a royal progress (for it was nothing less), the sister of Condé was received with more than royal honours. Troops lined the banks; fortresses poured forth their garrisons to welcome her approach; the keys of Namur, then held by Spain, were laid at her feet; complimentary harangues hailed her arrival at Liège, Maestricht, and Ruremonde; and amidst the roar of cannon, and the acclamations of ten thousand voices, the triumphant beauty was restored to the arms of her husband. At Munster

she exhibited the state and splendour of a crowned head. But her heart was depressed by ennui, if not agitated by more guilty emotions. Tours were undertaken, palaces built, wars of etiquette successfully waged with rival princesses, diplomatic intrigues twisted and untwisted : but gloom still settled on the spirit of her to whose diversion all other minds were ministering.

She returned to Paris. Condé had exalted the glories of her house. Mazarin got up an Italian opera for her amusement. Ben-serade and Voiture referred to her award the question, then agitating the whole Parisian world, of the comparative excellence of their rival sonnets. She became a mother. On every side the tedium of existence was assailed by new excitements ; but melancholy still brooded over her. Relief was however at hand. The dissensions, the wars, the intrigues of the *Fronde*, filled the void which nothing else could fill. Her share in that mad revel is known to all the readers of De Retz, La Rochefoucault, De Montpensier, and De Motteville. Her younger brother, the Prince de Conti, was but a puppet in her hands. With Condé she quarrelled one day, and made it up the next. De Retz was alternately her ruler and her dupe. Marsaillac alone acquired a lasting influence over her mind. He flattered, amused, animated, and governed her, to whose government alone the factious and the frivolous were alike willing to bow. With her infant in her arms, she appeared on the balcony, at the Hôtel de Ville, "beautiful," says De Retz, "with her dress apparently, but not really, neglected ; while at the Grève, from the pavement to the tiles, was a countless multitude of men shouting with transport, and women shedding tears of tenderness." Never did mob-idolatry assume a more bewitching aspect. Hushed into affectionate silence were the harsh voices of the many-headed monster, as the peerless dame gave birth to "Charles Paris," her second son. Crowded even was that sick-chamber with black-robed councillors, and plumed officers, soliciting her commands for the defence of the blockaded capital.

Peace came, and she met almost on equal terms the haughty widow and mother of the kings of France. For her brother and her husband, she demanded and obtained the government of provinces ; for herself, a state ball at the Hôtel de Ville, with the presence of the queen-mother to grace her triumph ; for Marsaillac, the entrée at the Louvre in his carriage ; for his wife, a tabouret.

There are limits to human endurance. Against the entrée and the tabouret the whole nobility of France awoke in generous resentment. Astræa once more took her flight. Condé, Conti, and poor De Longueville himself, were conducted to Vincennes ; our

heroine fled to Normandy. Besieged in the Castle of Dieppe, she escaped on foot, and, after a march of some leagues along the coast, reached a fishing-boat, which lay at anchor there awaiting her arrival. A storm was raging; but, in defiance of all remonstrances, she resolved to embark. In an instant she was struggling for life in the water. Rescued with difficulty, but nothing daunted, she mounted behind a horseman, and for fifteen days evaded the pursuit of her enemies, in mean and desolate hiding-places. At length, reaching Havre, an English vessel conveyed her to Rotterdam. From that disastrous eclipse she emerged with undiminished splendour. From Stenay, Turenne advanced to meet her at the head of all his forces. She became a party with him to the convention by which the King of Spain bound himself to maintain the war with France till the liberation of the three captive princes; and sixty thousand crowns were promised for the support of the table and equipages of Turenne and the Princesse de Longueville. That more tender bonds than those of war and treason did not unite them, is ascribed by her biographers to her preference for one La Moussaye, the commandant of Stenay. There she braved the denunciations of her sovereign, opposing one manifesto to another, and adding to her other glories the praise of diplomatic eloquence.

Again the centre of all intrigue, the delirium, whether ambitious or voluptuous, of her heart, yielded for a while (and where beats the heart which is not enigmatical?) to remembrances, at once bitter and soothing, of the Carmelites of St Jacques, with whom in days of youth and innocency she had joined in far different aspirations. But in the *phantasmagoria* at Paris the scenes are again shifted. The parliaments remonstrate, the Princes are enlarged, the Cardinal exiled, and a royal declaration attests the innocence of Madame de Longueville. "Vous n'êtes plus criminelle, si ce n'est de lèse-amours," was the greeting on this occasion of her favourite Sarazin. She rewarded the poet with an embassy to the Spanish government; for the Duchesse had now undertaken a negotiation for peace between the two crowns. Her second triumph, however, was still incomplete. She returned in all the pomp of a conqueror to Paris, and once more met on equal terms the majesty of France.

It may reasonably be doubted whether there exists at this day one human being who has found leisure and inclination to study with exact attention, in all its tedious details, the history of the wars of the "Fronde." But that they disturbed the peace and postponed the rising greatness of a mighty nation, they would have as little to commend them to serious regard as the cabals one may suppose to distract the fair council presiding over the internal economy of

Almack's. To assert, during the weakness of a long minority, some popular rights not otherwise to be maintained, and to restore the greater nobility to the powers of which Richelieu had dispossessed them, were indeed motives which gave some show of dignity to the first movement of the Frondeurs; but meaner passions, more frivolous questions, interests more nakedly selfish, or in themselves more contemptible, never before or since roused a people to war, or formed a pretext for rebellion. Cardinals, Judges, Monarchs, Princesses, Courtiers, and Generals whirl before the eye in that giddy maze—intriguing, lying, jesting, imprisoning, and killing, as though Bacchus, Momus, and Moloch had for a while usurped a joint and absolute dominion over the distracted land.

Among the figurantes in this dance of death, none is more conspicuous than the Duchesse de Longueville. In the third and last of those preposterous wars, the royal authority triumphed, and her star declined; but it now set to rise again in a new and far purer radiance. Like the wisest of the sons of men, she had applied her heart to see if there was any good thing under the sun; and, like him, she returned with a spirit oppressed by the hopeless pursuit, and proclaiming that all is vanity. "I have no wish so ardent" (such is her confession to the Prioress of the Carmelites) "as to see this war at an end, that, for the rest of my days, I may dwell with you, and apart from all the world besides. Till peace is concluded, I may not do so. My life seems to have been given me but to prove how bitter and how oppressive are the sorrows of this mortal existence. My attachments to it are broken, or rather crushed. Write to me often, and confirm the loathing I feel for this sublunary state."

It was a weary way which the returning penitent had to retrace. Now rising towards the heaven to which she aspired, her fainting spirit would again sink down to the earth she had too much loved. Long and arduous was the struggle—tardy, and to the last precarious, the conquest. But the conquest was achieved. Gainsay it who will, the spirit of man is the not unfrequent, though the hidden, scene of revolutions as real as that which, from the seed corrupting in the soil beneath us, draws forth the petals, diffusing on every side their fragrance, and reflecting in every varied hue the light of heaven. He who, with disappointed hopes, and the satiety of all the pleasures which earth has to offer, seeks refuge in that sanctuary which in the heat and confidence of youth he had despised, may well expect that human judges will note the change with incredulity or derision: nor, perhaps, has he much right to complain. There ever must be some ground for others to doubt whether the seeming love of long-neglected virtues be more than

real distaste for long-practised vices. That the *rouée* should pass into the *ennuyée*, and the *ennuyée* into the *dévoté*, may appear as natural as that the worm should become a chrysalis, and the chrysalis a butterfly. To the wits be their jests, and to the mockers their gibes. To those who can feel for some of the deepest agonies of our common nature, such jests will be at least less welcome than the belief that, when innocence is gone, all is not lost; and the conviction, that over the soul blighted and depraved by criminal indulgence, may still be effectually brooding an influence more gentle than a mother's love, and mightier than all the confederate powers of darkness and of guilt.

Few readers of the later correspondence of the Duchesse de Longueville will doubt that the change in her character was the result of such a renovating energy. At the age of thirty-four she finally retired from the cabals in which she had borne so conspicuous a part. Condé had now taken up arms against her native country, and Turenne commanded her armies. The Duchesse mourned alike the success and the reverses of her brother. De Longueville, a kind-hearted man, hailed with unabated tenderness her return to the paths of wisdom and peace. She watched with true conjugal care over his declining years, and even extended her kindness to one of his illegitimate daughters.

Touched by her altered conduct, the King and the Queen-mother admitted her not merely to their favour, but to a high place in their regard; nor are there many incidents in the life of Louis so amiable, as the affectionate gentleness of his demeanour to this once dangerous but now self-humbled enemy. On the death of her husband, she expended immense sums in the attempt to repair, in some degree, the calamities which the war of the Princes had inflicted on the peasantry. In a single year she restored to freedom, at her own expense, nine hundred persons imprisoned for debt; and had a list of no less than four thousand pensioners subsisting altogether on her bounty. The austere penances, which, at least, attested her sincerity, were combined, on all becoming occasions, with the princely magnificence due to her exalted station. Her eldest son, the Comte Du Dunois, a feeble-minded youth, turned Jesuit, took orders, escaped to Rome, and was placed under permanent restraint. The Comte St Paul, her only other child, was a wild profligate. He enjoyed ecclesiastical benefices of the annual value of 50,000 crowns, which she compelled him to resign unconditionally to the disposal of the King.

Louis revered and applauded such unwonted disinterestedness, and exerted all the magic of his flattery to win her back again to the

court and to the world. But she had learnt a salutary lesson of self-distrust. In the valley of Port-Royal she built a modest residence, where she found repose, if not serenity ; and soothed with humble hopes a spirit too deeply contrite to be visited by more buoyant feelings. Her own hand has traced the history of her declining years ; nor have the most pathetic preachers of that age of pulpit eloquence bequeathed to us a more impressive admonition. Whoever would learn what are the woes of ministering, by reckless self-indulgence, to the morbid cravings of the heart for excitement ; or how revolting is the late return to more tranquil pursuits ; or how gloomy is the shadow which criminal passions, even when exorcised, will yet cast over the soul they have long possessed ; or how, through that gloom, a light pure as its divine original, may dawn over the benighted mind with still expanding warmth and brightness—should study the Letters and the Confessions of Anne Geneviève, Duchesse de Longueville.

Such, and so conversant with the ways of the world, was the diplomatist who at length appeared for the rescue of the ladies of Port-Royal. No less skilful hand could have unravelled the folds in which the subject had been wrapped by intrigue and bigotry.

To explain what was the task she undertook, we must return a little on our former steps.

The original anti-Jansenist test had been promulgated by a synod of the clergy of France, adopted by the Sorbonne, and enforced by Louis. To the remonstrances of the nuns against being required to attest by their signatures a matter of fact of which they had, and could have, no knowledge, the King had answered only by reiterating the demand for a “ pure and simple ” subscription. “ His Majesty,” observed the Princesse de Guiméné, “ is supreme. He can make princes of the blood, bishops, and archbishops. Why not martyrs also ? ” It was a branch of the royal prerogative which he was nothing loth to exercise. De Retz abdicated the see of Paris, and was succeeded by De Marca, the author of the Formulary. Availing themselves of so happy an occasion, the Jesuits at Clermont drew up a thesis, in which was propounded for the acceptance of the faithful, the naked dogma of Papal infallibility, not only on points of doctrine, but as to mere matters of fact. Arnauld and his friends protested. Their protest was refuted by the hand and the torch of one of the great polemics of that age—the public executioner. De Marca did not live long ; and his death brought with it a truce in this holy war. His successor in the see of Paris, M. de Perifixe, resumed it, but with greater subtlety. He taught that it was enough if a matter of fact, asserted by the Pope, were believed not *d'une foi*

divine, but *d'une foi humaine*. Whether, in the Virgilian elysium, the recompense awarded to the inventors of useful arts awaits the authors of useful distinctions, has not been revealed to us ; but if so, De Perifixe may there have found his recompense. On earth it was his hard fate to be refuted by Nicole, to be laughed at by the Parisians, and to be opposed by the ladies of Port-Royal. They had no faith, divine or human, and they would profess none, as to the contents of a large folio written in a language of which they were entirely ignorant. "Pure as angels," said the incensed Archbishop ; "they are proud as devils !" How he punished their pride has already been recorded.

When a great dignitary has lost his temper there is nothing which he should more studiously avoid than the being hooked into the sort of contemporary record which the French call a *procès verbal*. In the midst of the nuns of Port-Royal, De Perifixe had stormed and scolded more in the style of a *poissarde* than of an Archbishop of Paris ; and when the chronicle of all his sayings and doings on the occasion stole into light, with all the forms of notarial certificates, he found himself, to his unutterable dismay, the hero of as broad a farce as had ever delighted that laughter-loving city. It was the single joke of which the nuns had ever been either the willing or the unintentional authors ; and they soon found to their cost that it was no light matter to have directed the current of ridicule against an archiepiscopal, and, through him, against a royal censor.

The invincible opposition of the Port-Royalists to the test, had awakened a more extended resistance. Men had begun to deny the right of assemblies of the clergy, or of the King himself, to impose such subscriptions. To retreat was, however, no longer possible. Louis, therefore, by the advice of the Jesuits, desired the Pope himself first to draw up a Formula, which should declare his own infallible knowledge of matters of fact ; and then to require the universal acceptance of it. Alexander VII. exultingly complied. Subscription to De Marca's test was now exacted by papal authority, with the addition that the subscribers should call on the Deity himself to attest their sincerity. To this demand the great body of the clergy of France submitted ; but still the resistance of the nuns of Port-Royal was unsubdued. Four years of persecution—of mean, unmanly, worrying persecution—followed. The history of it fills many volumes of the Conventual Annals, exciting in the mind of him who reads them, feelings of amazement and disgust, of respect and pity, strong enough to carry him through what it must be confessed is but a wearisome task. From the poor remnant of earthly comforts which these aged women had retained, the mean-spirited

king, his bigoted confessors, and his absurd archbishop, daily stole whatever could be so pilfered. From their means of preparing for the world where the wicked cease from troubling, every deduction was made which sacerdotal tyranny could enforce. But no tyranny could induce them to call on the God of Truth to attest a lie. One after another went down, with no priestly absolution, to graves which no priest would bless; strong even amidst the weakness and the mortal agonies of nature, in the assurance, that the path to heaven could not be found in disobedience to the immutable laws which Heaven itself had established.

Among the bishops of France, four had been faithful enough to insist on the distinction between the *droit* and the *fait*. In publishing the papal bull, they attached to it an express statement of their dissent from this new pretension of Rome. Of these prelates, one was a brother of the great Arnauld, and bore the same name. Alexander VII. was now on his death-bed; he had even received extreme unction. But at that awful hour he retained enough of human or of papal feeling to launch against the four prelates a brief full of menaces, which it devolved on his successor, Rospigliosi, to execute.

But Clement IX. was a man of a far greater and more Christian spirit. He had mourned over the distractions of the Church, and had made it his appropriate glory to mediate between the contending crowns of Spain and Portugal. To him the Duchesse de Longueville addressed herself on behalf of Port-Royal, in a letter of the most insinuating and impressive eloquence. His nuncio at Paris was made to feel all the powers of that fascinating influence which she still knew how to employ. At her hotel, and in her presence, a select committee met daily for the management of this affair. It was composed of three bishops, aided by Arnauld and Nicole. Condé himself was induced by his sister to lend the weight of his authority to her projects. Even Le Tellier was circumvented by the toils spread for him by this great mistress of intrigue. For nearly eighteen months she laboured to overcome the obstacles which the pride of Rome and of Louis, and the ill-will of the Father Annat, his confessor, opposed to her. All difficulties at length yielded to her perseverance and her diplomatic skill. The four bishops were content to denounce the "five propositions" as heretical, and to promise "a submission of respect and discipline," as to the *fact*, declaring that "they would not contest the papal decision, but would maintain an absolute silence on the subject." One of them insisted on adding an express statement of the fallibility of the Church respecting such matters of fact as the contents of a book.

Clement IX. was, however, satisfied. Peace was restored to the Gallican Church. Medals were struck, speeches made, and solemn audiences accorded by Louis to Arnauld and his associates. De Sacy and his fellow-prisoners were set at liberty. Port-Royal was once more permitted to recruit her monastery, to open her schools, and to give shelter to her dispersed recluses. Among the events which signalized the pacification of Clement IX., one demands especial notice. Malebranche had signed the Formulary. He now frankly avowed that he had condemned Jansenius without reading his book, and implored the pardon of God and of man for his guilty compliance.

It may perhaps be consolatory to some, in our own times, to be informed, that in censuring as heretical the book of a professor of divinity, of which they knew nothing but the title-page, they might have pleaded the example of so great a man — a comfort, however, to which they will not be entitled, unless they imitate also the example of his repentance.

Ten years elapsed from this pacification before the close of the extraordinary career of the Duchesse de Longueville ; and they were years distinguished in the chronicle of Port-Royal by little else than the peaceful lives and the tranquil deaths of many of the inhabitants of the valley. In their annals are to be found more than a century of names, to which their admirers have promised not only an eternal reward, but such immortality as the world has to bestow.

Overburdened as we are by the ever-increasing debt of admiration to the illustrious dead, these promises will hardly be fulfilled, at least by our busy age : nor is it easy even for one who has carefully travelled through the whole of these biographies, to select from among the female candidates for posthumous renown, those to whom such homage is especially due. Their portraitures have a strong resemblance to each other. To each, in her turn, is awarded the praise of passive virtue, of fervent piety, and of austerities from which nature shrinks. If a sense of the ludicrous will occasionally provoke a passing smile, or if a sigh must now and then be given to the melancholy superstitions of which they were the blameless victims, it is at least impossible to contemplate, irreverently or unmoved, the image of purity and peace, of mutual kindness and cheerful acquiescence in the Divine will, which discloses itself at each successive aspect of that holy sisterhood.

The sternest Protestant cannot rouse himself at once from the influence of this course of reading ; nor resume, without an effort, his conviction, that it is amidst the charities of domestic life that

female virtue finds the highest exercise, and female piety the most sublime elevation. He knows, indeed, that exuberant as is the charter of his faith in models of every human virtue, and in precepts of wisdom under every varied form, it contains not so much as a single example, or a solitary admonition, from which the Confessors of Port-Royal could have shown that a retreat to such cloisters was in accordance with the revealed will of God. He knows also, that thus to counteract the eternal laws of nature and the manifest designs of Providence, must be folly, however specious the pretext or solemn the guise which such folly may assume. He is assured that filial affection, cheerfully, temperately, bountifully, and thankfully using the gifts of Heaven, is the best tribute which man can render to Him who claims for himself the name and the character of a Father. But with all this knowledge, the disciple of Luther or of Calvin will yet close the *vies édifiantes* and the *nécrologies* of these holy women, not without a reluctance to doubt, and a wish to believe, that they really occupied the high and awful station to which they aspired ; and stood apart from the world, its pollutions, and its cares, to offer with purer hearts than others, and with more acceptable intercessions, the sacrifice of an uninterrupted worship, replete with blessings to themselves and to mankind. Peace then to their errors, and unquoted be any of the innumerable extravagances which abound in the records of their lives. To the recluses who shared, without ever breaking, their solitude, we rather turn for illustrations of the spirit which animated and characterised the valley of Port-Royal.

On the pacification of Clement IX., Louis Sebastian le Nain de Tillemont, who had been educated in the schools of Nicole and Lancelot, returned in the maturity of his manhood to a hermitage which he had erected near the court-yard of the abbey. Such had been his attainments as a boy, that the pupil had soon exhausted the resources of those profound teachers, and in his twentieth year had commenced those works on ecclesiastical history, which have placed him in the very foremost rank, if not at the head, of all who have laboured in that fertile though rugged field. To the culture of it his life was unceasingly devoted. Though under the direction of De Saci he had obtained admission to holy orders, he refused all the rich preferments pressed on him by the admirers of his genius. Year after year passed over him, unmarked by any event which even the pen of his affectionate biographer, Fontaine, could record. "He lived," says that amiable writer, "alone, and with no witness but God himself, who was ever present with him, and who was all in all to him." It was only in an habitual and

placid communion with that one associate, that he sought relief from his gigantic toils ; and with a spirit recruited by that communion, he returned to the society of the Emperors, the Popes, the Fathers, and the Saints, who were to him as companions and as friends. To a man long conversant with the anxieties of a secular calling, the soft lights and the harmonious repose of such a picture may perhaps exhibit a delusive aspect ; yet it can hardly be a delusion to believe, that for such colloquy with the minds which yet live in books, and with that Mind which is the source of all life, would be wisely abandoned whatever ambition, society, fame, or fortune, have to confer on their most favoured votaries.

So at least judged one whom fame and fortune wooed with their most alluring smiles. Racine had been trained at Port-Royal, in the same schools and by the same masters as Tillemont. For the great dramatist, no sympathy could of course be expressed by the austere dwellers in the desert ; and perhaps the friendship of Boileau may have consoled him for the alienation of his old teacher Nicole. But when, in his *Visionnaires*, that devout and learned man denounced the writers of stage-plays as the *Empoisonneurs publics des âmes*, Racine keenly felt and resented the reproach. Like most controversialists, he lived to repent the asperity of his language : but his repentance yielded fruits, the like of which have rarely been gathered from that bitter stem. The author of *Andromaque* not only sought the pardon and regained the friendship of Arnauld and Nicole, but actually renounced the drama, exhorted his son to abandon poetry, became the advocate and the historian of Port-Royal, and secured for his bones a resting-place in that consecrated soil.

Happily for the world, a method was afterwards discovered of reconciling the exercise of Racine's genius with the severe principles which Nicole had instilled into him when a boy, and had revived with such decisive effect in his riper days. *Esther* and *Athalie* were allowed, even at Port-Royal, to be works not unseemly for a man whose single talent was that of writing verses, and who, if he could do nothing better, was at least acknowledged to do that well. But alas for human consistency ! He who traced those majestic scenes where reliance on the Divine arm triumphs over all human regards and terrors, was doomed himself to pine away and even to die of a hard saying of the hard master it was his ill fate to serve. His guilt was to have drawn up a Memoir on the means of relieving the starving poor at Paris. His punishment, the indignant exclamation of the great Louis, "Because he is an all-accomplished versifier, does he presume that he knows everything ? Because he is a great poet, does he mean to become a minister ?" Well might

the sensitive spirit which such a feather could crush, wish with Wolsey that he had served his God as faithfully as his King, and repine amidst the pageantries of Versailles for the devout composure of Port-Royal.

And many were the eminent men who sought and enjoyed that repose. There dwelt the Prince de Conti, one of the heroes of the Fronde, and still more memorable for his penitence and restitutions; of whom it is recorded, that his young children were so impressed by his absolute devotedness to the Divine will, as to conceal from him the story of Abraham, lest the example of the sacrifice of Isaac should be imitated at their own expense. There, too, resided the Duc de Laincourt, on whom fortune had exhausted all her bounties, and who, under the loss of them all, rose to the utmost heroism of a meek, unrepining, and cheerful resignation. Pontchateau, a noble, a courtier, an ambassador, and at length the apostolical prothonotary at Rome, brought all the strange vicissitudes of his life to an end, by becoming, under the name of Le Mercier, a common labourer in the gardens, and a devout worshipper in the Church of Port-Royal. But this chronicle of worthies, spreading out into interminable length, must give place to a very brief account of the events which reduced to a desert the solitudes which they had cultivated and adorned.

Amidst the contentions of the Gallican Church, full proof had been given of the keen edge of those weapons which might be borrowed from the papal arsenals. It readily occurred to the sufferers, that the resources which the Jesuits had so successfully employed, might be turned against themselves. Pascal had startled the civilised world with the exposure of Molinist errors, hostile not merely to the Catholic creed, but to those principles of virtue which are the very cement of human society. They had imputed to Jansenius five heresies on the obscure subjects of Divine grace and human freedom; but who could number the propositions in which Escobar and his associates had spurned the authority of the decalogue itself? The assiduity of the bishops of Arras and St Pons collected sixty-five of these scandalous dogmas, and these they transmitted to Rome in a memorial of which Nicole was believed to be the writer, and known to be the translator. Righteous, unqualified, and decisive was the papal condemnation of the morality of the Jesuits; but fatal to the repose of Port-Royal was this triumph of one of her brightest ornaments. The Duchesse de Longueville had lately died, and with her had disappeared the motive which had induced Louis to show some forbearance to the objects of her affectionate solicitude. Harlay now governed the see of Paris. He was a man of

disreputable character, and the mere instrument of the King. Louis was in bondage to Madame de Maintenon, and she to the Jesuits. Their vengeance scarcely sought a pretext, and soon found its gratification.

In the exercise of his archiepiscopal authority, Harlay banished De Sacy, Tillemont, and Pontchateau, from the valley of Port-Royal. Nicole and Arnauld sought shelter in the Netherlands from his menaces. The postulantes and scholars were once more expelled, and the admission of novices was again forbidden.

At this epoch, another lady of the house of Arnauld—a cousin and namesake of the Mère Angelique—was invested with the dignity of abbess. Her genius, her virtue, and her learning, are the subject of eulogies too indistinct to be impressive, and too hyperbolical to win implicit credence. Yet, if she was the writer of the memoir in defence of her monastery which bears her name, there was no apparent obstacle, but her sex and her profession, to her successful rivalry of the greatest masters of juridical eloquence in France. Ineffectual, however, would have been all the rhetoric which ever adorned the parliament of Paris, to avert the threatened doom of the stronghold of Jansenism. As he approached the tomb, Harlay's resentment became more deep and settled. He left it a fatal inheritance to his successor, the Cardinal De Noailles. A weak and obstinate, but not an unfeeling man, De Noailles owed his promotion to the see of Paris to his fixed hostility to Port-Royal, and his known willingness to hazard the odium of subverting that ancient seat of piety and learning. The apology soon presented itself.

Several years had elapsed since the dispute about "*Le Droit et le Fait de Jansenius*" had apparently reached its close. Revolving this passage of bygone history, a priest had improved or amused his leisure, by drawing up, for the decision of the Sorbonne, "a case of conscience," which, it must be owned, was a hard problem for the most expert casuist. Of two infallible Popes, one had with his dying breath affirmed as a momentous truth, a proposition which the other had abandoned, if not refracted. What was it the duty of the faithful to believe on the subject? Forty doctors answered, that it was enough to maintain a respectful silence as to the "*fait de Jansenius*." Archiepiscopal mandaments, treatises of the learned, royal orders in council, and parliamentary arrêts, flew thick and fast through the troubled air, and obscured the daylight of common sense. Again the eldest son of the Church invoked the authority of her spiritual father. In oracular darkness went forth from the Vatican, the sentence, that "respectful silence is not a sufficient deference for apostolical constitutions." This is what is called in ecclesiastical

story, the bull "Vineam Domini Sabaoth." Under shelter of an abstract theorem which no Catholic could deny, it ingeniously concealed the conflict of opinion of two infallible Pontiffs. Subscription of their unqualified assent to the bull "Vineam" was demanded from the nuns of Port-Royal, and from them alone. They cheerfully subscribed; but with the addition, that their signature was not to be understood as derogating from what had been determined on the pacification of Clement IX. This was their final and their fatal act of contumacy. Decree after decree was fulminated by De Noailles. He forbade the admission of any new members of their house. He prohibited the election of an abbess. He despoiled them of a large part of their estates. He interdicted to them all the sacraments of the Church. He obtained a papal bull for the suppression of their monastery; and in October, 1709, he carried it into effect by an armed force, under the Marquis D'Argenson.

There is in Westminster Hall a tradition that an eminent advocate of our own times addressed to the House of Peers, during sixteen successive days, a speech, in the course of which (such is the calculation) he employed all the words in Johnson's Dictionary, one with another, just thirty-five times over. Neither boasting the copiousness nor presuming on the patience which were at the command of that great lawyer, we have compressed into a few sentences the history of a contest, which, if not so abridged, would have swollen to the utmost limits of that unparalleled oration. But to those who have leisure for such studies, and who delight in a well-fought forensic field, we can promise that pleasure in the highest degree from a perusal of the contest between the aged ladies of Port-Royal, and their royal, mitred, and ermined antagonists. Never was a more gallant struggle against injustice. After exhausting all the resources of legal defence, those helpless and apparently feeble women disputed every inch of ground by protests, remonstrances, and petitions, which, for the moment at least, held their assailants in check, and which yet remain a wondrous monument of their perseverance and capacity, and of the absolute self-control which, amidst the outpourings of their griefs, and the exposure of their wrongs, restrained every expression of asperity or resentment. Never was the genius of the family of Arnauld exhibited with greater lustre, and never with less effect.

In a grey autumnal morning, a long file of armed horsemen, under the command of D'Argenson, was seen to issue from the woods which overhung the ill-fated monastery. In the name of Louis he demanded and obtained admission into that sacred inclosure. Seated on the abbatial throne, he summoned the nuns into his presence.

They appeared before him veiled, silent, and submissive. Their papers, their title-deeds, and their property were then seized, and proclamation made of a royal decree which directed their immediate exile. It was instantly carried into effect. Far and wide along the summits of the neighbouring hills, might be seen a thronging multitude of the peasants whom they had instructed, and of the poor whom they had relieved. Bitter cries of indignation and of grief, joined with fervent prayers, arose from those helpless people, as, one after another, the nuns entered the carriages drawn up for their reception. Each pursued her solitary journey to the prison destined for her. Of these venerable women, some had passed their eightieth year, and the youngest was far advanced in life. Labouring under paralysis and other infirmities of old age, several of them reached at once their prisons and their graves. Others died under the distress and fatigues of their journey. Some possessed energies which no sufferings could subdue. Madame de Remicourt, for example, was kept for two years in solitary confinement; in a cell lighted and ventilated only through the chimney; without fire, society, or books. "You may persecute, but you will never change Madame de Remicourt," said the Archbishop; "for" (such was his profound view of the phenomenon) "she has a square head, and people with square heads are always obstinate."

Last in the number of exiles appeared, at the gates of the abbey, the prioress, Louise de St Anastasie Mesnil de Courtiaux. She had seen her aged sisters one by one quit for ever the abode, the associates, and the employments of their lives. To each she had given her parting benediction. She shed no tear, she breathed no murmur, nor for a moment betrayed the dignity of her office, nor the constancy of her mind. "Be faithful to the end," were the last words which she addressed to the last companion of her sorrows. And nobly did she fulfil her own counsels. She was conducted to a convent, where, under a close guard, she was compelled to endure the utmost rigours of a jail. Deprived of all those religious comforts which it is in the power of man to minister, she enjoyed a solace, and found a strength, which it was not in the power of man to take away. In common with the greater part of her fellow-sufferers, she died without any priestly absolution, and was consigned to an unhallowed grave. They died the martyrs of sincerity; strong in the faith that a lie must ever be hateful in the sight of God, though infallible popes should exact it, or an infallible Church, as represented by cardinals and confessors, should persuade it.

Unsatiated by the calamities of the nuns, the vengeance of the enemies of Port-Royal was directed against the buildings where they

had dwelt, the sacred edifice where they had worshipped, and the tombs in which their dead had been interred. The monastery and the adjacent church were overthrown from their foundations. Workmen, prepared by hard drinking for their task, broke open the graves in which the nuns and recluses of former times had been interred. With obscene ribaldry, and outrages too disgusting to be detailed, they piled up a loathsome heap of bones and corpses, on which the dogs were permitted to feed. What remained was thrown into a pit, prepared for the purpose, near the neighbouring churchyard of St Lambert. A wooden cross, erected by the villagers, marked the spot; and many a pilgrim resorted to it, to pray for the souls of the departed, and for his own. At length no trace remained of the Fortress of Jansenism to offend the eye of the Jesuits, or to perpetuate the memory of the illustrious dead with whom they had so long contended. The mutilated Gothic arch, the water-mill, and the dovecot, rising from the banks of the pool, with the decayed towers and the farm-house on the slopes of the valley, are all that now attest that it was once the crowded abode of the wise, the learned, and the good. In that spot, however, may still be seen the winding brook, the verdant hills, and the quiet meadows, nature's indestructible monuments to the devout men and holy women who nurtured there affections which made them lovely in their lives, and hopes which rendered them triumphant in death. Nor in her long roll of martyrs has history to record the names of any who suffered with greater constancy, or in a nobler cause; for their conflict was with the very Church which they most profoundly revered, and their cause was that of devotedness to sincerity and abhorrence of falsehood.

Amongst the interpreters of the counsels of Divine Providence in that age, there were not wanting many who found, in the calamities which overwhelmed the declining years of Louis, the retribution of an avenging Deity for the wrongs inflicted on Port-Royal. If it were given to man to decipher the mysterious characters engraven on the scroll of this world's history, it might not be difficult to find, in the annals of his reign, other and yet more weighty reasons for the awakening of Nemesis in France at the commencement of the eighteenth century. But of the mere chronological fact, there is no doubt. The death of the three Dauphins, and the victories of Eugene and Marlborough, followed hard on the dispersion of the nuns. With his dying breath, Louis cast the responsibility of his conduct towards them on the Jesuits who stood round his bed. "If, indeed, you have misled and deceived me"—such was his last address to his confessors—"you are deeply guilty, for in

truth I acted in good faith. I sincerely sought the peace of the Church."

The humiliation of his spiritual advisers quickly followed. It was preceded by the retirement and death of Madame de Maintenon, who had both provoked and derided the sufferings of the Port-Royalists. The very type of mediocrity out of place, she is to our mind the least attractive of all the ladies of equivocal or desperate reputation, who, in modern times, have stood on the steps of European thrones. Her power was sustained by the feebleness of the mind she had subdued, and by the craftiness of those who had subjugated her own. Her prudery and her religiousness, such as it was, served but to deepen the aversion which her intriguing, selfish, narrow-minded, and bigoted spirit excite and justify; although, in her own view of the matter, she probably hoped to propitiate the favour of Heaven and the applause of the world, by directing against the unoffending women of Port-Royal the deadly wrath of the worn-out debauchee, whose jaded spirits and unquiet conscience it was her daily task to sustain and flatter.

De Noailles, the instrument of her cruelty, lived to bewail his guilt with such strange agonies of remorse, as to rescue his memory from hatred, although it is difficult to contemplate, without some contempt, such a paroxysm of emotions, which, however just in themselves, deprived their victim of all powers of self-control, and of every semblance of decorous composure. His howlings are described by the witness of them, to have been more like those of a wild beast or a maniac, than of a reasonable man.

If these slight notices of the heroes and heroines of Port-Royal (slight, indeed, when compared with the materials from which they have been drawn) should be ascribed by any one to a pen plighted to do suit and service to the cause of Rome, no surmise could be wider of the mark. No Protestant can read the writings of the Port-Royalists themselves, without gratitude for his deliverance from the superstitions of a Church which calls herself Catholic, and boasts that she is eternal. That she will flourish as long as the race of man shall endure, is indeed a conclusion which may reasonably be adopted by him who divines the future only from the past. For where is the land, or what the age, in which a conspicuous place has not been held by phenomena essentially the same, however circumstantially different? In what æra has man not been a worshipper of the invisible? In what country has imagination—the sensuous property of the mind—failed to triumph over those mental powers which are purely contemplative? Who can discover a period in

which religion has not more or less assumed the form of a compromise—between the self-dependence and the self-distrust of her votaries—between their abasement before a merely human authority and their conviction that no such allegiance is really due—between their awe of the Divine power and their habitual revolt against the Divine will? Of every such compromise, the indications have ever been the same—a worship of pomp and ceremonial—a spiritual despotism exercised by a sacerdotal caste—bodily penances and costly expiations—and the constant intervention of man, and of the works of man, between the worshipper and the supreme object of his worship. So long as human nature shall continue what it is, the religion of human nature will be unchanged. The Church of Rome will be eternal, if man, such as he now is, shall himself be eternal.

But for every labour under the sun, says the Wise Man, there is a time. There is a time for bearing testimony against the errors of Rome: why not also a time for testifying to the sublime virtues with which those errors have been so often associated? Are we for ever to admit and never to practise the duties of kindness and mutual forbearance? Does Christianity consist in a vivid perception of the faults, and an obtuse blindness to the merits, of those who differ from us? Is charity a virtue only when we ourselves are the object of it? Is there not a Church as pure and more catholic than those of Oxford or Rome—a Church comprehending within its limits every human being who, according to the measure of the knowledge placed within his reach, strives habitually to be conformed to the will of the common Father of us all? To indulge hope beyond the pale of some narrow communion, has, by each Christian society in its turn, been denounced as a daring presumption. Yet Hope has come to all, and with her Faith and Charity, her inseparable companions. Amidst the shock of contending creeds, and the uproar of anathemas, good men have listened to gentler and more kindly sounds. They may have debated as polemics, but they have felt as Christians. On the universal mind of Christendom is indelibly engraven one image, towards which the eyes of every true disciple of Christ are more or less earnestly directed. Whoever has himself caught any resemblance, however faint and imperfect, to that divine and benignant Original, has, in his measure, learnt to recognise a brother in every one in whom he can discern the same resemblance.*

* See on this subject a book entitled "The Catholic Spirit of Christianity," the anonymous work of the Rev. E. M'Vicar, now a minister of the Church of Scotland, in Ceylon. Why such a book should not have attained an extensive celebrity, or why such a writer should have been permitted to quit his native land, are ques-

There is an essential unity in that "Kingdom which is not of this world." But within the provinces of that mighty state there is room for endless varieties of administration, and for local laws and customs widely differing from each other. The unity consists in the one object of worship—the one object of affiance—the one source of virtue—the one cementing principle of mutual love, which pervade and animate the whole. The diversities are, and must be, as numerous and intractable as are the essential distinctions which nature, habit, and circumstances have created among men. Uniformity of creeds, of discipline, of ritual, and of ceremonies, in such a world as ours!—a world where no two men are not as distinguishable in their mental as in their physical aspect; where every petty community has its separate system of civil government; where all that meets the eye, and all that arrests the ear, has a stamp of boundless and infinite variety! What are the harmonies of tone, of colour, and of form, but the result of contrasts—of contrasts held in subordination to one all-pervading principle, which reconciles without confounding the component elements of the music, the painting, or the structure? In the physical works of God, beauty could have no existence without endless diversities. Why assume that in religious society—a work not less surely to be ascribed to the supreme Author of all things—this law is absolutely reversed? Were it possible to subdue that innate tendency of the human mind, which compels men to differ in religious opinions and observances, at least as widely as on all other subjects, what would be the results of such a triumph? Where then would be the free comparison, and the continual enlargement of thought; where the self-distrusts which are the springs of humility, or the mutual dependencies which are the bonds of love? He who made us with this infinite variety in our intellectual and physical constitution, must have foreseen, and foreseeing must have intended, a corresponding dissimilarity in the opinions of his creatures on all questions submitted to their judgment, and proposed for their acceptance. For truth is his law; and if all men will profess to think alike, all men must live in the habitual violation of that law.

Zeal for uniformity attests the latent distrusts, not the firm convictions of the zealot. In proportion to the strength of those convictions on our minds, is our indifference to the multiplication of suffrages in favour of our judgment. Our thoughts are steeped in imagery; and where the palpable form is not, the impalpable spirit escapes the notice of the unreflecting multitude. In common hands, tions to which we fear no satisfactory answer could be given by the dispensers of fame or of Church preferment.

analysis stops at the species or the genus, and cannot rise to the order or the class. To distinguish birds from fishes, beasts from insects, limits the efforts of the vulgar observer of the face of animated nature. But Cuvier could trace the sublime unity, the universal type, the fontal Idea, existing in the creative intelligence, which connects as one the mammoth and the snail. So, common observers can distinguish from each other the different varieties of religious society, and can rise no higher. Where one assembly worships with harmonies of music, fumes of incense, ancient liturgies, and a gorgeous ceremonial, and another listens to the unaided voice of a single pastor, they can perceive and record the differences; but the hidden ties which unite them both escape such observation. All appears as contrast, and all ministers to antipathy and discords. It is our belief that these things may be rightly viewed in a different aspect, and yet with the most severe conformity to the Divine will, whether as intimated by natural religion, or as revealed in Holy Scripture. We believe that, in the judgment of an enlightened charity, many Christian societies, who are accustomed to denounce each other's errors, will at length come to be regarded as members in common of the one great and comprehensive Church, in which diversities of forms are harmonised by an all-pervading unity of spirit. For ourselves, at least, we should deeply regret to conclude that we were aliens from that great Christian Commonwealth of which the Nuns and Recluses of the valley of Port-Royal were members, and members assuredly of no common excellence.

END OF VOL. I.





